United Nations A/71/313

General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 August 2016

Original: English

Seventy-first session
Item 22 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Groups of countries in special situations: follow-up to the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries

Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to resolution 70/217, in which the General Assembly requested that the Secretary-General submit, at its seventy-first session, a report on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024. The report provides a review of the progress made to date, sets out the major challenges encountered and includes recommendations to accelerate the implementation of the Programme of Action.

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16-13727 (E) 290816

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I. Introduction

1. With a combined population of more than 470 million, landlocked developing countries constitute one of the most vulnerable groups of countries around the world. Spread over four continents, these 32 countries form a diverse group that collectively finds it difficult to overcome the challenges imposed by their geographical location and remoteness from the nearest sea ports. Owing to the long distances from the sea and the necessary transit through neighbouring countries, coupled with cumbersome border-crossing procedures and inadequate transit and transport infrastructure, landlocked developing countries face disproportionately high transport and trade transaction costs. Consequently, their competitiveness is eroded and economic growth is affected. In addition, these countries exhibit low productive capacity and rely on a limited number of products, in particular primary commodities with little value added for their export earnings, leaving them vulnerable to external shocks, including commodity price fluctuations.

2. The Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 was adopted at the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 69/137. The present report provides an update on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action, focusing on the six key priority areas.

3. Ways to foster coherence with the follow-up and review arrangements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are addressed in section II of the present report, and an overview of the recent socioeconomic performance of landlocked developing countries is presented in section III. The status of implementation under the priority areas is provided in section IV, and information from the follow-up and review is set out in section V. Section VI contains conclusions and policy recommendations. The report was prepared on the basis of information provided by United Nations system entities, Member States and international and regional organizations. An annex containing statistical tables is attached.

II. Fostering coherence in the follow-up, implementation and review of the Vienna Programme of Action, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other global development frameworks

4. The outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", was adopted in 2015 as a new, ambitious and universal development agenda to be implemented over the next 15 years. In its 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, the 2030 Agenda encompasses the three pillars of sustainable development, namely, economic development, social development and environmental development. The 2030 Agenda is a transformative agenda that emphasizes equality and inclusiveness and underscores the principle of leaving no one behind. The means of implementation targets under Goal 17 and under each Goal are key to realizing the 2030 Agenda. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, supporting and complementing it and helping to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies

and actions. The full implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda is critical for the realization of the Goals.

5. Both the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda recognize the special needs of landlocked developing countries. As stated in the 2030 Agenda, the Vienna Programme of Action is integral to the 2030 Agenda. All 17 Sustainable Development Goals are relevant for these countries in their pursuit of sustainable development. In addition, the 2030 Agenda contains specific references to landlocked developing countries in various paragraphs, including in three Goals: Goal 7 on energy, Goal 9 on infrastructure and sustainable industrialization and Goal 10 on reducing inequality. The Vienna Programme of Action addresses the specific needs of these countries, and its effective implementation is instrumental for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

6. It is vital for landlocked developing countries to implement the Vienna Programme of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals in a coherent and integrated manner, including by prioritizing financing, capacity-building and technology, in order to effectively achieve the goals of both programmes. Mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda and the Vienna Programme of Action coherently into national development planning is important, as doing so will help capitalize on the synergies required for effective implementation. There is also a need to ensure integrated monitoring of the 2030 Agenda and the Vienna Programme of Action, with the Programme indicators used to complement the Goal indicators. Landlocked developing countries will require strengthened capacities for data collection and analysis in order to effectively implement, monitor and report on their progress with regard to the 2030 Agenda and the Vienna Programme of Action. The high-level political forum on sustainable development was mandated to play the central role in overseeing follow-up and review processes at the global level for the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. At the 2016 session of the high-level political forum, particular focus was placed on countries in special situations, including landlocked developing countries. It is important that the high-level political forum continue to review the special needs of these countries to ensure that they are not left behind.

7. The launch of the Global Infrastructure Forum, led by the multilateral development banks and held in Washington, D.C. on 16 April 2016, is an important follow-up to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for landlocked developing countries. It is important that the Forum address the infrastructure needs of these countries in a focused manner.

8. Other global development frameworks that are relevant to landlocked developing countries and vital for their achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals include the Paris Agreement, concluded at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. Under the Paris Agreement, it was resolved that the provision of urgent and adequate finance, technology and capacity-building support to developing countries would be enhanced. In the Sendai Framework, it was noted that disaster-prone developing countries, especially those that are landlocked, warranted particular attention in view of their higher vulnerability and risk levels, which often greatly exceeded their capacity to respond to and recover from disasters. It was reaffirmed that such countries needed enhanced provision of

coordinated, sustained and adequate international support for disaster risk reduction. The fourteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), held in July 2016, was expected to adopt an outcome document relevant to these countries, as is an upcoming international conference on sustainable transport, to be held in November 2016. It is important that the Vienna Programme of Action and the additional global programmes be taken and implemented together to ensure that landlocked developing countries derive optimal support.

III. Overview of recent socioeconomic developments in landlocked developing countries

9. In the last decade (2004-2014), the gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of landlocked developing countries averaged 7 per cent. Growth rates rose from 4 per cent in 2000 to a high of almost 10 per cent in 2006 and 2007, before falling back to 4.1 per cent in 2009. Following a recovery in the period 2010-2013, 11 countries showed GDP growth higher than 6 per cent in 2014. However, the overall GDP of landlocked developing countries grew by just 5.4 per cent that year, more than one full percentage point lower than in 2013. In 2015, only six such countries showed GDP growth higher than 7 per cent, while the average GDP of landlocked developing countries grew by just 3.7 per cent, more than 1.5 percentage points lower than in 2014.

10. On the basis of the human development index, only five landlocked developing countries rank among countries with high human development. According to the index, the average ranking of landlocked developing countries in 2014 was 0.56, with the highest in the group being 0.79 and the lowest being 0.35. While most such countries have improved their ranking in recent years, with two moving up by more than 10 ranks between 2009 and 2014, six have fallen in the ranks during the same period. In addition, out of the 44 countries with the lowest rankings and classified as low development countries, 16 were landlocked developing countries.

11. Despite efforts and commitments to tackle it, poverty remains prevalent in many landlocked developing countries, although it has been on the decline since 2002. The proportion of the population of these countries living below the international poverty line of $1.90 per day (in 2011 purchasing power parity prices) declined from 48.6 per cent in 2002 to 30.5 per cent in 2012. There are, however, large variations among the countries. In nine such countries, half of the population lives below the aforementioned poverty line. Greater efforts will be needed in order to reduce poverty and eradicate extreme poverty over the next 15 years.

12. Landlocked developing countries are characterized by a high prevalence of food insecurity and are exposed to higher and more volatile food prices. For instance, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), over the period 2000-2013, the FAO Food Price Index was 73 per cent higher in these countries as compared with developing countries as a group. Landlocked developing countries remain particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, which is aggravating desertification and land degradation. These countries have gradually lost forest area as a proportion of total land area, dropping from 17.1 per cent in 2000 to 15.7 per cent in 2015, compared with the world

average of 30.7 per cent. In addition, most agricultural land in landlocked developing countries is arid and semi-arid, characterized by high variability in rainfall. Such challenges have devastating consequences for the livelihoods of poor families and undermine efforts made by landlocked developing countries to eradicate hunger. The prevalence of undernourishment in these countries was estimated at 22.7 per cent in the period 2014-2016, which is 76 per cent higher than the average of developing countries as a whole. More investment is needed, both public and private, from domestic and foreign sources, to support these countries in increasing their agricultural productivity.

13. With regard to health, landlocked developing countries have made some progress towards reducing under-five mortality rates from 139.7 per 1,000 live births in 2000 to 67.9 in 2015. However, the current rate is more than 46 per cent higher than the average for the developing world. Landlocked developing countries made progress in reducing the HIV incidence rate from 2.13 per 1,000 uninfected people in 2000 to 0.84 in 2015. However, despite this improvement, these countries still have the highest incidence rate, at more than double the average rate of the developing world. Rates of malaria incidence in landlocked developing countries are also double the average of the developing world.

14. Landlocked developing countries have made steady social progress during the period 2000-2014, reflected particularly in overall improvements in both primary and secondary school enrolment indicators. This progress notwithstanding, more remains to be done. With regard to gender equality and empowering all women and girls, these countries have made progress on the related indicators over the period 2000-2015, in particular on women's representation in national parliaments.

15. Access to improved drinking water sources and sanitation remains low in many landlocked developing countries. Data on the level of water stress show that these countries have higher level of water stress when compared with the world average or the average for developing regions.

IV. Status of implementation of the priorities of the Vienna Programme of Action

A. Priority 1: fundamental transit policy issues

16. Landlocked developing countries, transit countries and development partners are making efforts to implement the actions specified in the Vienna Programme of Action that will help towards the achievement of the specific objectives of the priority area on fundamental transit policy issues. Since the previous report (A/70/305), more landlocked developing countries and transit countries have ratified the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Trade Facilitation. Details are presented under priority 3. In 2015, one landlocked developing country, the Niger, and two transit countries, Thailand and Argentina, became parties to the revised Kyoto Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures. Also in 2015, Azerbaijan, a landlocked developing country, acceded to the Convention concerning International Carriage by Rail, and in July 2016, Pakistan, a transit country, acceded to the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets.

17. While progress is being made to ratify relevant international conventions, more needs to be done. Both landlocked developing countries and transit countries face challenges such as a lack of awareness about the legal instruments, limited information on the potential benefits of ratification, information on conventions not being available in a language that can be easily utilized, cumbersome domestication processes, a lack of sharing of experience and capacity constraints.

18. More work is needed to create greater awareness and understanding of the implications of accession to the international conventions through capacity-building among policymakers and administrators, in-depth studies on the costs and benefits of joining the conventions, and guidelines for the implementation of the conventions. Mainstreaming of the conventions at the national level is also important, as it will allow for their incorporation in national development plans and budgetary allocations.

19. In Asia, the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports entered into force in April 2016. The treaty establishing the Eurasian Economic Union came into force in January 2015 among Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation. The treaty governing the accession of Armenia to the Union came into force in January 2015, while that of Kyrgyzstan came into effect in August 2015.

20. In 2015, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal signed a motor vehicle agreement that would further improve transit processes for landlocked Nepal and Bhutan. Once implemented, the agreement is expected to reduce costly and time-consuming trans-shipment of people and goods at border crossings.

21. Also in 2015, the Heads of State and Governments of the African Union adopted a continental development strategy entitled "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want". The African Union has also adopted a decision in which it called on countries to introduce a 30-day visa on arrival for all citizens of African countries. Countries such as Ghana and Rwanda have taken the lead by relaxing visa restrictions and offering a visa-on-arrival option for all Africans. It was agreed at the January 2016 summit that African Union e-passports would be issued, with the aim of facilitating free movement of persons, goods and services around the continent.

22. The intergovernmental process towards the computerization of the international road transport customs document (TIR carnet) procedure, eTIR, is under way.

B. Priority 2: infrastructure development and maintenance

23. Landlocked developing countries and transit countries, in cooperation with their development partners, continue to make efforts to expand and upgrade their road transport and border crossing infrastructure. For example, in 2014 and 2015, Mongolia paved 18,381 km of road connecting several provinces that border China and the Russian Federation. The Government of Zambia continues to implement the Link Zambia 8000 road project. Armenia is implementing its North-South road corridor investment programme and improving the M6 Armenia-Georgia border transit road. Various road connectivity projects in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal are being implemented to improve parts of the Asian Highway network. Despite these efforts, more needs to be done to close the gaps.

24. There were no significant changes between 2013 and 2014 in the data on railway infrastructure for the 13 landlocked developing countries that have available data. In 2014, air passenger volume was extremely low, with landlocked developing countries making up only 0.8 per cent of the global total. Similar patterns were found for freight volumes in air transport, which averaged only 0.9 per cent of the global total.

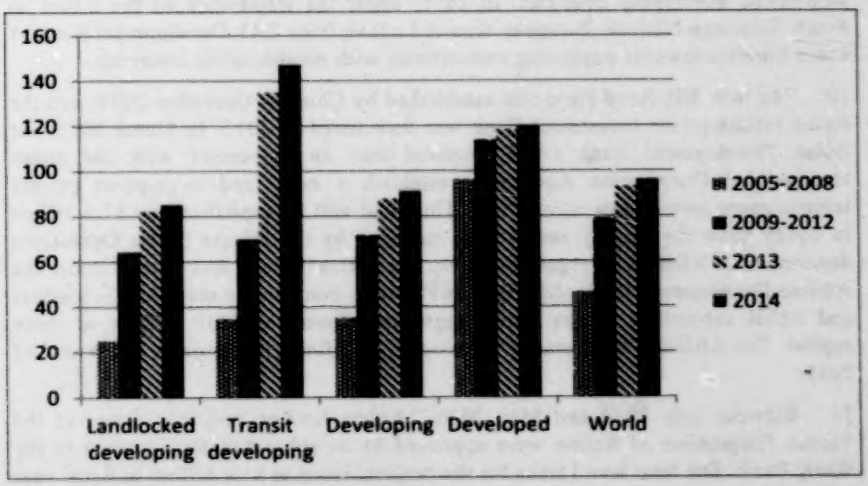
25. With regard to energy, the average proportion of the population having access to modern energy in landlocked developing countries is 55 per cent. However, this data mask the disparities between countries, with nine having reached universal access, while eight are trailing behind the others, with an access rate lower than 20 per cent. According to recent data by the International Energy Agency, more than 300 million people in landlocked developing countries — or two thirds of their total population — rely on traditional use of biomass for cooking, underscoring the urgent need for improved access to clean and modern cooking energy.

26. The average renewable energy share of landlocked developing countries in the total final energy consumption category decreased from 44.3 per cent in 2000 to 29.2 per cent in 2012. More efforts are needed to promote greater use of renewable energy sources.

27. Landlocked developing countries continue to experience growth in information and communications technology (ICT), in particular mobile communications, as shown in figure I.

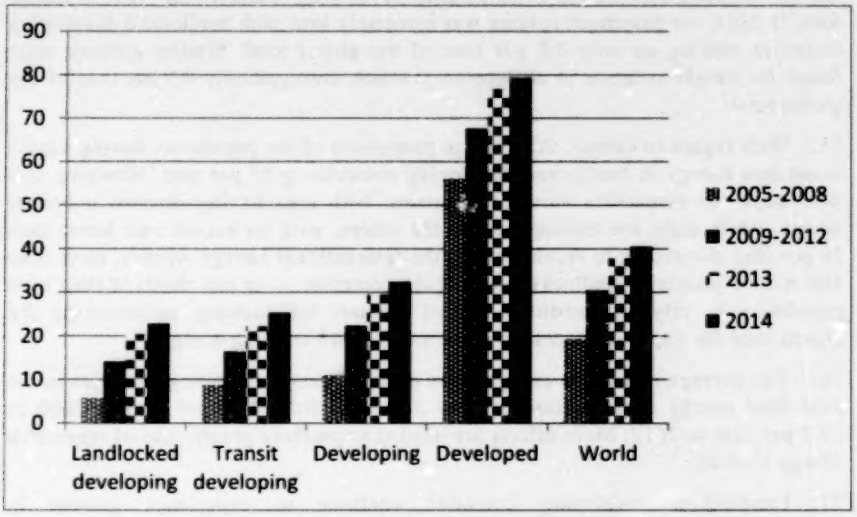
28. In contrast, access to the Internet, although increasing steadily, remained low in the majority of landlocked developing countries, with an average 20 out of 100 people being Internet users in 2014, compared with 22 out of 100 people in transit countries (see figure II). This average also masks important disparities among landlocked developing countries. More efforts are required in order to promote open and affordable access to the Internet for all and to address the digital divide.

Figure I
Mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 people)



Source: International Telecommunication Union statistics.

Figure II
Internet users (per 100 people)



Source: International Telecommunication Union statistics.

29. Many landlocked developing countries support their infrastructure development and maintenance using funding from road-user charges, such as toll gates and fuel levies, or main budget allocations. Mobilization of additional resources for infrastructure development is critical, to complement the domestic efforts made by these countries. The Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) has ongoing infrastructure projects with Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Paraguay amounting to $605.5 million in the transport sector and $229 million in the energy sector. Furthermore, IADB has a total of $435 million in the pipeline, under its private sector lending arm, geared towards infrastructure development for landlocked developing countries. In 2015, under the framework of the Union of South American Nations, Paraguay received a loan from CAF Development Bank of Latin America towards improving connectivity with neighbouring countries.

30. The new Silk Road Fund was established by China in December 2014, and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank was formalized in 2015. In March 2016, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) entered into an agreement with the Japan International Cooperation Agency to establish a new fund to support private infrastructure investments across Asia. This fund will be capitalized by $1.5 billion in equity from the Agency and will be managed by the Private Sector Operations department of ADB. With regard to Africa, the Africa50 Fund was created under the African Development Bank (AfDB) in 2015. At its constitutive session, 20 countries and AfDB subscribed for an initial aggregate amount of $830 million in share capital. The Africa50 Fund started developing and financing projects at the end of 2015.

31. Between July 2014 and May 2016, 28 new lending projects related to the Vienna Programme of Action were approved by or submitted for approval to the World Bank. The total loan values for the projects stood at $1.6 billion in fiscal year

2015 and $1.2 billion in fiscal year 2016. The focus of the projects includes trade facilitation, road connectivity, electricity access expansion and regional communications infrastructure. Half of the loan portfolio focuses on Africa, in terms of both value and number of projects, followed by Europe and Central Asia. The majority of loans to landlocked developing countries by loan value fall in the transport sector.

32. Development partners on a bilateral level have provided support for infrastructure development. For example, Austria has supported the construction of hydropower stations in Bhutan and Nepal (after the earthquake), while the United States Agency for International Development is providing support for a hydropower development project in Nepal and road construction in Afghanistan, and Italy is providing support for transport infrastructure development in Afghanistan.

C. Priority 3: international trade and trade facilitation

33. In 2014, the average ratio of trade to GDP was 68 per cent for landlocked developing countries, while the world average was 58 per cent. While this signifies that trade is critically important for landlocked developing countries, their share of global exports fell in 2015 to just 0.96 per cent. Before this decline, the export share had more than doubled from 0.5 per cent in the 1990s, levelling out to an average of 1.21 per cent between 2011 and 2014. The majority of these countries, however, are still marginalized with respect to international trade. For example, just four landlocked developing countries in Central Asia account for 55 per cent of the group's total merchandise exports, while 20 such countries account for no more than 2 per cent each.

34. Merchandise exports from landlocked developing countries were estimated at $158 billion in 2015, registering a fall of 30 per cent over 2014. Such a dramatic decline was caused by the collapse in commodity prices and sluggish demand. This was the second year that landlocked developing country exports fell, following a 2 per cent fall in 2014. Merchandise imports to these countries also fell in 2014 and 2015, reaching an estimated $186 billion in 2015.

35. Merchandise exports from landlocked developing countries are highly concentrated in just a handful of products, in particular raw commodities. With a concentration index of 0.36 in 2014, these countries have a greater export product concentration than their transit neighbours and developed countries. Moreover, export concentration has increased over the years. Landlocked developing countries need to undertake efforts to diversify their exports in order to reduce their vulnerability and enhance their competitiveness.

36. Trade facilitation is one of the areas in which a lot of progress was made between 2004 and 2014. An important step towards ensuring a common platform for the implementation of trade facilitation measures at the global level was the adoption of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation at the ninth WTO Ministerial Conference, held in Bali in 2013. The Agreement sets out a series of measures to expedite the passage of goods across borders, including ensuring freedom of transit, with the main objectives being to reduce bureaucratic obstacles trade and decrease trade costs. One of the innovative elements of the Agreement is that it strengthens the delivery of technical assistance and capacity-building support for developing

countries, based on the capacity of each country. In addition, the standards set out in the Agreement are subject to binding WTO trade disciplines.

37. The full implementation of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation has the potential to reduce the trade costs of WTO member States by 14.3 per cent on average. The reduction for landlocked developing countries is estimated to be 15.4 per cent on average, with 19.3 per cent and 11.7 per cent, respectively, in manufactured and agricultural products. Simplification of trade documents, streamlining of border procedures and automation of the border process appear to have the greatest impact on trade costs. Full implementation of the Agreement can reduce the average time required to import by more than one and a half days (47 per cent reduction) and the time to export by almost two days (91 per cent reduction).

38. As of 5 July 2016, 85 countries had ratified the Agreement, including 10 landlocked developing countries and 12 transit countries. As of 21 June 2016, WTO had received 87 notifications of category A commitments, including 15 from landlocked developing countries and 18 from transit countries. It is important for landlocked developing countries and transit developing countries to indicate their capacity-building needs by submitting notifications under category C, so they can take full advantage of the technical assistance and capacity-building facilities available to them. As of 21 June 2016, five notifications under categories B and C were received, including one from a landlocked developing country.

39. The provisions of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation call on each Member State to establish and maintain a national committee or body on trade facilitation. A number of landlocked developing countries are establishing or strengthening national trade facilitation committees in order to improve facilitation and domestic coordination and implementation of the Agreement, in addition to certain areas of the Vienna Programme of Action.

40. Many landlocked developing countries and transit countries, with support from development partners, are continuing to implement initiatives to speed up transit transport and border-crossing procedures, including one-stop border posts, electronic single-window systems, electronic payment systems for customs duties and taxes, TIR carnets, an automated system for customs data (ASYCUDA), regional third-party motor vehicle insurance and electronic cargo tracking systems. National single window systems are currently operational, under construction or being planned in all regions featuring landlocked developing countries, with 22 such countries already using ASYCUDA.

41. Despite positive changes in this area, landlocked developing countries still bear a considerably high cost of trade. WTO estimates that trade costs for these countries are equivalent to applying an ad valorem tariff of 260 per cent to international trade costs. Average trade costs for landlocked developing countries are also 1.5 times higher than those of transit countries. The Trading Across Borders indicators of the World Bank show that, on average, landlocked developing countries are also characterized by a higher number of documents and longer wait times required for export or import compared with transit countries.

D. Priority 4: regional integration and cooperation

42. The participation of landlocked developing countries in regional integration frameworks is critical for increased access to markets, connectivity, enhanced

competitiveness, harmonization of policies and rise in trade and investment. Based on notifications submitted to WTO, landlocked developing countries are party to, on average, 3.8 regional trade agreements, with the numbers ranging from 0 to 11 among each of these countries.[1] Another measure of integration is the number of regional investment agreements to which landlocked developing countries are party. As of 7 June 2016, landlocked developing countries had signed, on average, 21 bilateral investment treaties each, with the numbers ranging from 0 to 50 agreements signed per country and an average of 14 in force. This is a slight improvement over the data collected as at the end of March 2015. Landlocked developing countries also signed, on average, seven other international investment agreements each.

43. The level of trade integration varies by region. For example, intracontinental imports are estimated at 4.3 per cent of the GDP of Africa, 6.7 per cent in the Americas, 17.9 per cent in Asia and 21 per cent in Europe. In the Africa region, the share of intra-African exports stood at a low level of 15.7 per cent of the total in 2014. The East African Community (EAC) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) regions, which contain 11 of the 16 African landlocked developing countries, report relatively higher shares of intraregional trade compared with other regions. In the case of Asia and the Pacific region, intraregional trade has slowed down, largely due to sluggish growth in China. Trade among Asian landlocked developing countries themselves is very low; however, their trade levels tend to be high particularly with large neighbours such as China, Russia, India and Thailand. In Latin American, intraregional trade among landlocked developing countries is relatively high, representing 55 per cent of total trade for Bolivia and 49 per cent for Paraguay in 2014.

44. In 2015, the Agreement for the Establishment of a Tripartite Free Trade Area was signed by member and partner States of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, EAC and SADC, although a number of elements of the Agreement remain to be finalized. The launch of negotiations for a continental free trade area is expected to contribute to the industrialization of African countries, promote a rise in regional value chains and support structural transformation by facilitating intra-African trade. The regional integration index, developed by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), AfDB and the African Union Commission, tracks the status of integration among regional economic communities on the dimensions of trade integration, productive integration, macroeconomic policy convergence, free movement of persons and regional infrastructure. According to the index, three landlocked developing countries (Botswana, Uganda and Zambia) have been ranked as deeply and broadly integrated, scoring high overall and in several dimensions. The performance of other countries suggests that there is still room for improvement.

E. Priority 5: structural economic transformation

45. Structural economic transformation is a process that involves the reorientation of economic activity from low value-added and low productivity activities and

[1] WTO statistics on regional trade agreements are based on notification requirements rather than on the actual number of such agreements. Thus, a regional trade agreement that includes both goods and services is counted as two notifications — one for goods and one for services — even though it actually consists of one physical agreement.

sectors to those with higher value-added and higher productivity levels. It is basically a transformative shift from traditional sectors and activities to new ones that include higher technology content. Structural transformation is critical for the successful integration of landlocked developing countries into the global economy and the achievement of sustained, broad-based economic growth that creates employment.

46. Between 2000 and 2015, the value-added of the agriculture sector as a percentage of GDP in landlocked developing countries declined by an average of about 7 percentage points, to 14.6 per cent. Over the same period, the value-added of the services sector in these countries was high, rising by 3 percentage points on average, while the value-added of the manufacturing sector, historically at the core of economic growth and transformation in addition to employment generation, declined from 8.9 to 6.9 per cent of GDP. In addition, the share of manufactured goods in total exports from landlocked developing countries decreased from 21 per cent in 2000 to 13 per cent in 2014, while around 70 per cent of imports to these countries were manufactured products. Furthermore, available employment data for landlocked developing countries show a higher proportion of the working population employed in the agriculture or services sector rather than in industry. This reflects the limited industrial content of exports from these countries. The difficulties experienced by landlocked developing countries in moving up the value chains are further illustrated by the low and stagnant technology content of their exports. The limited data show that high-technology content as a percentage of manufactured exports is less than 10 per cent for 15 of the 20 landlocked developing countries for which data are available.

47. As indicated above, landlocked developing countries rely heavily on a limited number of mineral resources and low-value agricultural products for their exports. Primary commodities, including fuels, accounted for 80 per cent of merchandise exports by landlocked developing countries in 2014, up from 67 per cent in 2000. These countries are more commodity-dependent when compared with other developing countries, as primary commodities accounted for more than half of the exports of 27 out of 32 landlocked developing countries in the period 2011-2013. In contrast, for global exports, these commodities accounted for just 32 per cent in 2014. Such heavy dependence on commodities makes these countries highly vulnerable to commodity price and demand volatility, further exacerbated by their low productive capacities and structural weaknesses. Since services are not as sensitive to the challenges of distance and delays as merchandise, and since they account for just 15 per cent of exports from landlocked developing countries, there is great potential for these countries to promote growth in the services sector.

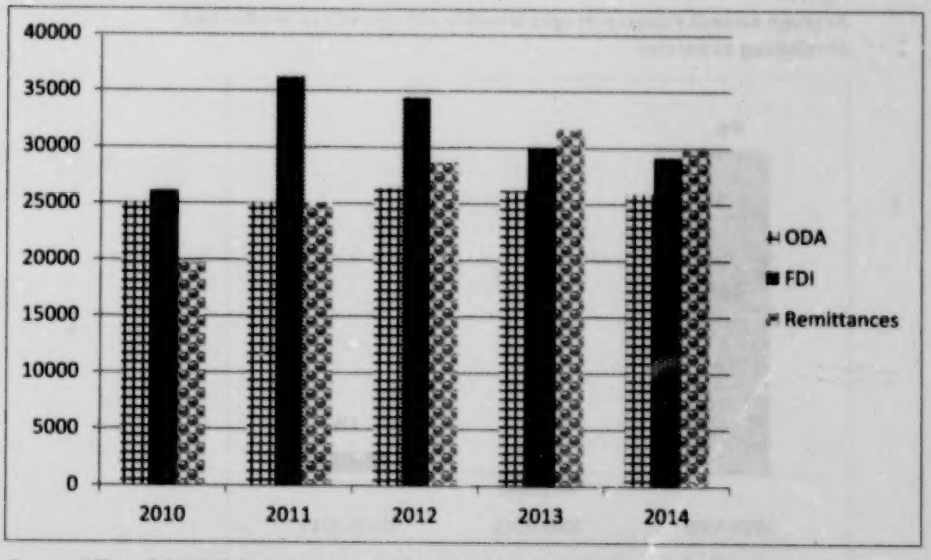
48. A move from traditional economic activities into higher value-added activities and high-employment generating sectors, such as manufacturing, agro-industry and modern services, should be promoted in landlocked developing countries. In order to ensure more opportunities for value-addition, these countries need to set up an enabling environment for cooperation with the private sector and for attracting foreign investment. They also need sufficient infrastructure, institutions and technical knowledge to compete in value chains or at least given segments of value chains. In a positive move, several landlocked developing countries have been realigning their national strategies with a view to diversifying their economies towards non-traditional exports.

F. Priority 6: means of implementation

49. While the Vienna Programme of Action recognizes that the development of any country is the primary responsibility of the country itself, it underscores the importance of strengthened and expanded partnerships among landlocked developing countries, their transit neighbours, their development partners and other stakeholders for the successful implementation of the Programme of Action.

50. Figure III shows inflows of official development assistance (ODA), foreign direct investment (FDI) and remittances to landlocked developing countries between 2010 and 2014. In 2014, net ODA to such countries decreased slightly by 1.1 per cent over 2013, from $26.2 billion to $25.9 billion. Two countries (Afghanistan and Ethiopia) continue to dominate ODA receipts, accounting for 32 per cent of total receipts. ODA remained the main source of external financing, accounting for 10 per cent or more of gross national income in 2014 in eight landlocked developing countries, and between 5 per cent and 9.9 per cent in seven such countries.

Figure III
Official development assistance, foreign direct investment and remittances to landlocked developing countries, 2010-2014
(Millions of United States dollars)



Source: Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States; calculations based on data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, UNCTAD and the World Bank.

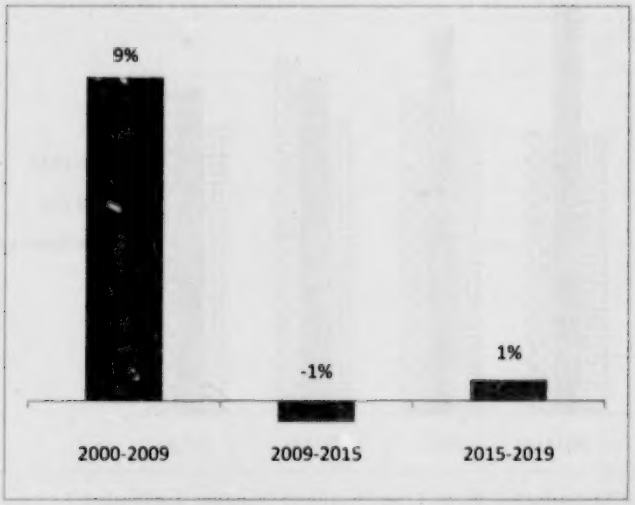
51. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), allocations of concessional finance[2] to landlocked developing countries

[2] Concessional finance covers concessional outflows from bilateral sources, namely, bilateral gross official development assistance, as well as gross multilateral concessional outflows to developing countries.

represented about 22 per cent of total concessional finance to all developing countries in 2014. Concessional finance to landlocked developing countries represented 55 per cent of their total external finance, compared with 18 per cent for all developing countries, showing a high level of dependence of the former group on concessional financing. Since 2000, concessional finance going to the landlocked developing countries has increased substantially. However, excluding the two largest recipient countries, the growth in concessional finance to these countries is in line with that of developing countries over the period 2007-2014. The biggest providers of concessional finance to landlocked developing countries, representing 45 per cent of this envelope, are the United States, the European Union and the World Bank International Development Association. Grants represented 82 per cent of the portfolio in 2014, the same percentage as in 2005.

52. Concessional finance going to landlocked developing countries takes the form of country programmable aid[3] and humanitarian aid food aid. In 2014, programmable aid represented 81 per cent of aid received by this group of countries. Between 2000 and 2009, global programmable aid to landlocked developing countries increased substantially, at an annual average rate of 9 per cent, but since then has stagnated, hovering at around $22 billion. Country programmable aid projections up to 2019 show little signs of increased ambitions (see figure IV).

Figure IV
Average annual country programmable aid growth to landlocked developing countries

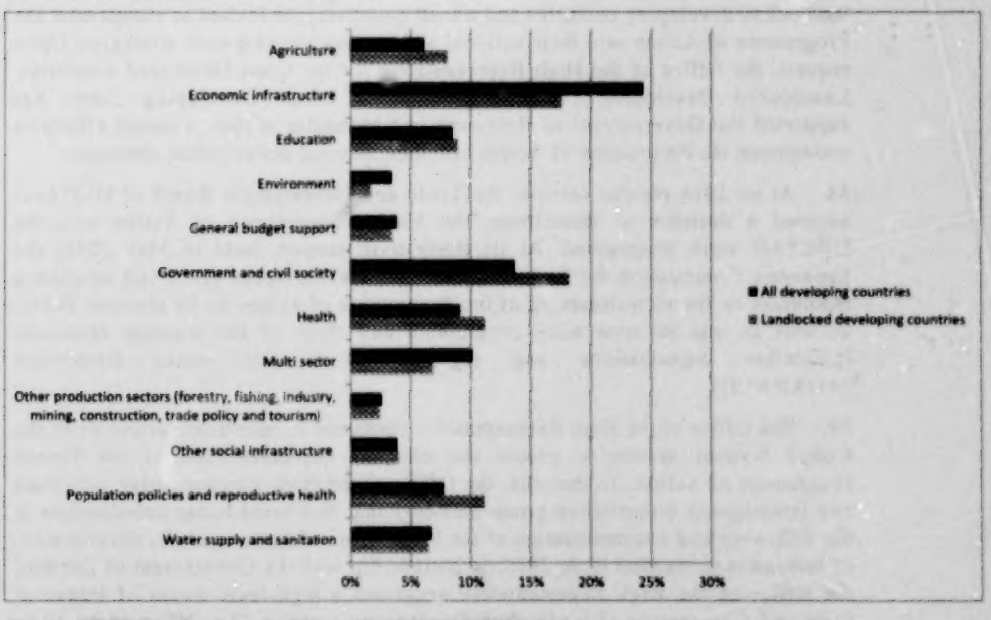


Source: OECD calculations and estimates based on Development Assistance Committee statistics.

[3] The contributions of donors to country-level development programmes are best captured by the concept of country programmable aid, which is a subset of gross bilateral ODA and is critical for the support of the Sustainable Development Goals. Country programmable aid tracks the proportion of ODA over which recipient countries have, or could have, significant say. Several studies have also shown that programmable aid is a good proxy of aid recorded at the country level (excluding humanitarian aid).

53. According to OECD analysis, sectoral distribution of country programmable aid (see figure V) reveals that landlocked developing countries receive a higher share of such aid than other developing countries in a number of sectors, such as government and civil society, or population policies and reproductive health. This is not the case for the economic infrastructure sector in general or the area of transport and storage in particular, both of which are specifically relevant to the special needs of landlocked developing countries. Looking forward, the major challenge will be to prevent further decline in ODA and to step up assistance for landlocked developing countries. At its high-level meeting in December 2014, the OECD Development Assistance Committee adopted a communiqué outlining its members' commitment to dedicating a higher proportion of total ODA to those countries most in need, specifically mentioning landlocked developing countries as one of the groups to be further supported. In February 2016, the Development Assistance Committee welcomed the ongoing efforts by the membership to develop and implement policy actions in accordance with the 2014 mandate on reversing the declining trend of ODA to countries most in need, including landlocked developing countries. In addition, there is a need for cooperation providers to pay particular attention to critical sectors for these countries, especially economic infrastructure.

Figure V
Country programmable aid by sector, 2014



Source: OECD Development Assistance Committee statistics.

54. Aid for trade to landlocked developing countries doubled since 2002. Disbursements to these countries stood at $6.49 billion in 2014, down from $6.7 billion in 2013. Most support is going to economic infrastructure (56 per cent) and building productive capacities (41 per cent). Given the importance of aid for trade in addressing the special needs of landlocked developing countries, it is

important that disbursements are enhanced and funds allocated to regional or multi-country projects as well.

55. FDI inflows to landlocked developing countries fell slightly, by 3 per cent, to $29.1 billion in 2014, as the global downturn in commodity prices severely reduced investment prospects in many of these economies. However, 67 per cent of FDI went to only four countries. It is important to find ways of helping all landlocked developing countries attract and retain foreign direct investment, especially through infrastructure development and the reduction of trade barriers.

56. Remittances to landlocked developing countries fell slightly, by 6 per cent, to $29.8 billion in 2014. Remittances were higher than official development assistance in 10 such countries. However, the private nature of these funds restricts their use for public goods such as roads, railways and ports, and there is a need for effective policies to leverage the inflow of remittances to strategic sectors. Landlocked developing countries could explore the possibility of providing funds to match remittances and use the combined resources to finance public infrastructure projects in local communities, through special financial mechanisms and instruments.

V. Follow-up and review

57. In the Vienna Programme of Action, Member States, in particular the landlocked developing countries and transit countries, are invited to mainstream the Programme of Action into their national and sectoral development strategies. Upon request, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States has supported the Governments of Botswana and Mongolia in their national efforts to mainstream the Programme of Action into their national development strategies.

58. At its 2015 regular session, the Trade and Development Board of UNCTAD adopted a decision to mainstream the Vienna Programme of Action into the UNCTAD work programme. At its thirty-sixth session, held in May 2016, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) adopted a resolution on the mainstreaming of the Programme of Action by its member States, as well as into its own work programme and those of the regional economic integration organizations and regional development banks (resolution 711(XXXVI)).

59. The Office of the High Representative continued to coordinate activities of the United Nations system to ensure the effective implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action. To that end, the Office of the High Representative convened two inter-agency consultative group meetings that facilitated better coordination in the follow-up and implementation of the Programme of Action and the development of indicators to monitor it. In 2015, in partnership with the Government of Zambia, the Office of the High Representative organized a high-level forum of Heads of State and Government of landlocked developing countries. The Office of the High Representative also organized a retreat on the implications of the new global development agenda for landlocked developing countries and an expert group meeting on improving transit cooperation, trade and trade facilitation for the benefit of these countries.

60. In cooperation with WTO, the Office of the High Representative organized the fifth meeting of trade ministers of landlocked developing countries, held in Geneva on 23 and 24 June 2016. Meeting participants adopted a ministerial declaration that highlighted how these countries can enhance their trade potential and overcome structural challenges to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction. In the declaration, participants called for, among other things, coordinated policies on infrastructure, logistics, technology and investment; concerted measures to support the efforts of landlocked developing countries to reduce commodity dependence; the rapid ratification of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation; and a dedicated WTO work programme for these countries.

61. In 2016, the Office of the High Representative, in partnership with the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the International Road Transport Union, convened a series of events to raise the awareness of member States on the process, potential benefits and implications of accession to international conventions related to the facilitation of transport and trade and to urge them to participate in the 2016 treaty event to be held in September 2016.

62. The Office of the High Representative continued to support the landlocked developing country group in promoting its agenda, which among other results, led to the priorities of these countries being reflected in the new development frameworks. The Office of the High Representative also undertook research and analytical work on key issues related to priorities of the Vienna Programme of Action.

63. ECA is undertaking a continent-wide initiative to strengthen the capacity of member States to promote the use of renewable energy and provide them with capacity-building support on trade facilitation, infrastructure development, international trade, regional integration, road safety and aviation and tourism policies. The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, in cooperation with the African Union Commission, ECA and OECD, sensitized African countries on the theme of leveraging pension funds for financing infrastructure development in Africa. ECE undertook a series of national needs assessment studies on both behind-the-border and at-the-border procedural and regulatory barriers to trade and offered training on trade facilitation to landlocked developing countries. ECE and the International Road Transport Union launched a pilot project on the computerized international road transport customs procedure, eTIR, that would serve as a basis for identifying any potential drawbacks in the system before its complete operationalization.

64. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is providing capacity-building support to landlocked developing countries and transit countries for their accession to and implementation of international conventions, trade facilitation, regional integration and trade, and the promotion of economic diversification. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is undertaking analytical work on current transport infrastructure and logistics policies in the region, while promoting integrated and sustainable regional policy on logistics and mobility in South America. ECA, ECE, ECLAC and ESCAP, in collaboration with OECD, conducted global surveys on trade facilitation and paperless trade. They also provided technical assistance.

65. In 2015, UNCTAD published research papers on facilitating the participation of landlocked developing countries in commodity value chains and on trade

facilitation and development. UNCTAD continues to provide technical support to these countries on commodity diversification and value addition, on the development and implementation of trade strategies that are conducive to poverty reduction and on capitalization of diaspora engagement in national development.

66. The International Trade Centre is helping landlocked developing countries to improve the ability of small and medium-sized enterprises to compete and to address non-tariff barriers. In 2015, the International Telecommunication Union provided capacity-building support to these countries through workshops on broadband service quality with respect to end users and on green ICTs using smart grids. The International Civil Aviation Organization supported member States, including landlocked developing countries, in developing a harmonized regulatory framework in air transport and infrastructure development.

67. Through capacity-building workshops and advisory services, the United Nations Environment Programme is supporting landlocked developing countries in adopting no- and low-emissions transport policies and in promoting greater use of energy efficiency measures that lead to reduced greenhouse gas emissions and improved air quality. FAO is providing technical support to landlocked developing countries on trade and market development; the preparation and implementation of large investment operations; projects to increase the production and productivity of crops, livestock and fisheries; and the strengthening of food and nutrition security.

68. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is supporting Member States in integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into their development strategies. It is also providing technical assistance on trade facilitation, helping to promote export competitiveness and assisting entrepreneurs in building a viable business. In addition, together with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, UNDP helped landlocked developing countries to prepare national voluntary presentations on their progress towards the Goals (Bolivia in 2014, Kyrgyzstan and Zambia in 2015 and Uganda in 2016).

69. WTO continues to work on receiving ratifications of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation and on preparing for its entry into force. WTO provided training to its member States on national trade facilitation committees and on the implementation of the Agreement and is implementing the 2016-2017 Aid for Trade work programme under the theme of promoting connectivity. The World Customs Organization is converting its Transit Handbook into transit guidelines that would include clear guiding principles and recommended practices for its member States to use. In 2015, the Customs Organization held several capacity-building and training workshops for requesting customs administrations, as well as regional workshops on transit issues in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

70. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe provided technical assistance on border-crossing facilitation and good governance in customs and on connectivity for commerce and investment. The Common Fund for Commodities is providing support to landlocked developing countries on the development of policy measures and actions that facilitate value addition to commodities and beneficial integration into regional and global commodity value chains. The International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries is operating under interim management while it waits to be fully operationalized when the multilateral agreement on its establishment enters into force. In 2015, the Think Tank prepared a

report entitled "Multilateral trade negotiations and LLDCs: a handbook for negotiators and practitioners of LLDCs."

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

71. Landlocked developing countries are working towards mainstreaming the Vienna Programme of Action into their national strategies. These countries may consider creating a high-level national multi-stakeholder body in order to give strong impetus to coherently implement all Programme priorities with medium-term plans and programmes. Because these priorities are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, only high-level attention and a coordinated multi-stakeholder approach will be able to help landlocked developing countries overcome their constraints. Similarly, transit developing countries may also consider mainstreaming the Programme of Action to ensure its effective implementation. Development partners are urged to consider, through South-South and triangular cooperation, the need to give priority to landlocked developing countries and to align their support with the priorities of these countries themselves.

72. Landlocked developing countries are encouraged to mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals in their development strategies in a way that fosters coherence with the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action.

73. In order to bridge the infrastructure and finance gaps, landlocked developing countries may develop and embed infrastructure investment development plans in their national development strategies and strengthen their domestic enabling environment. The international community should consider the need to provide financial and technical support for these countries to translate such plans into concrete implementable projects, particularly with regard to the preparation of feasibility studies, negotiation of contracts and management of projects.

74. Landlocked developing countries, in cooperation with transit developing countries where appropriate, may need to continue to develop and implement trade facilitation measures to simplify border crossing operations, implement joint border management systems and harmonize customs and other border crossing rules, procedures and documentation, with a view to ensuring faster and cheaper cross-border trade in line with global facilitation standards. Landlocked developing countries and transit countries might consider establishing a high-level coordinating body to facilitate smooth and efficient transit for the former group.

75. All WTO member States that have not yet done so, in particular landlocked developing countries and transit developing countries, are encouraged to ratify the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation and undertake the necessary measures to effectively implement it. Landlocked developing countries may need to articulate their needs in a holistic manner in order to receive the technical and capacity-building assistance they require, to be provided by the development partners and international organizations.

76. Landlocked developing countries and transit developing countries may need to enhance regional integration and cooperation by strengthening intraregional trade, engaging in bilateral and multilateral trade and transit-related agreements, developing regional infrastructure and harmonizing policies. This should help turn landlocked countries into land-linked countries.

77. To facilitate structural transformation, landlocked developing countries may need to employ national policies and measures aimed at the development of industries and diversification of their economies, by shifting away from commodities and low-value agricultural products to higher value-added activities and sectors, such as manufacturing, agro-industry and modern services, that also have potential to generate higher levels of employment. There is a need to consider developing a well-articulated strategy and action plans, to be implemented through close coordination of private sector and other stakeholders. Development partners should provide technical, financial and capacity-building assistance to support landlocked developing countries towards creating the enabling environment required for cooperation with the private sector and attracting foreign investment and towards developing the infrastructure, institutions and technical knowledge necessary to compete in value chains and international markets.

78. The international community should consider supporting landlocked developing countries in developing policies to address the challenges presented by land degradation, desertification, deforestation and climate change. This should be done in an integrated manner so as to enhance agricultural production and food security.

79. Landlocked developing countries may need to emphasize their need for increased donor support, in particular towards areas that are closely linked to the special development challenges that stem from their landlockedness and geographical isolation from major global markets. They should be supported in economic infrastructure development, smooth transit facilitation, enhancing diversification and mitigating the impacts of climate change and desertification.

80. Landlocked developing countries are encouraged to accede to or ratify, in an expeditious manner, all the conventions and agreements that are directly relevant to promoting trade facilitation, transit facilitation, efficient border crossings and the movement of goods and services between countries. These countries are further encouraged to ratify the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of an International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries in order to bring it into full operation.

Annex

Statistical tables

Table 1
Gross domestic product, rate of growth and human development index

	GDP (constant 2010 prices, millions of United States dollars)		*GDP growth (annual percentage)*	*GDP per capita, PPP (constant 2011 prices, United States dollars)*		*Human development index*
Landlocked developing countries	*2010*	*2015*	*2015*	*2010*	*2015*	*2014*
Afghanistan	15 937	20 294	1.52	1 663	1 820	0.465
Armenia	9 260	11 446	3.00	6 508	7 899	0.733
Azerbaijan	52 903	59 025	1.10	15 950	16 695	0.751
Bhutan	1 585	1 999	3.25	6 486	7 601	0.605
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	19 650	25 445	3.96	5 407	6 476	0.662
Botswana	12 787	16 019	-0.25	13 120	14 876	0.698
Burkina Faso	8 980	11 419	3.98	1 422	1 562	0.402
Burundi	2 027	2 344	-2.54	708	693	0.400
Central African Republic	1 986	1 385	5.49	889	562	0.350
Chad	10 658	13 359	1.80	1 924	2 044	0.392
Ethiopia	29 934	48 331	9.61	1 076	1 530	0.442
Kazakhstan	148 047	185 031	1.20	20 945	24 353	0.788
Kyrgyzstan	4 794	6 059	3.47	2 790	3 225	0.655
Lao People's Democratic Republic	7 181	10 458	7.00	3 985	5 341	0.575
Lesotho	2 187	..	..	2 233	..	0.497
Malawi	6 960	8 511	2.95	1 061	1 113	0.445
Mali	10 679	15 885	7.61	1 783	2 285	0.419
Mongolia	7 189	11 671	2.30	7 709	11 471	0.727
Nepal	16 003	19 669	3.36	1 997	2 313	0.548
Niger	5 719	7 638	3.61	821	897	0.348
Paraguay	20 031	25 393	3.01	7 290	8 644	0.679
Republic of Moldova	5 812	7 005	-0.50	3 925	4 742	0.693
Rwanda	5 699	8 007	6.90	1 329	1 655	0.483
South Sudan	15 727	8 856	-6.35	3 794	1 741	0.467
Swaziland	3 528	3 949	1.66	7 642	7 930	0.531

Landlocked developing countries	*GDP (constant 2010 prices, millions of United States dollars)*		*GDP growth (annual percentage)*	*GDP per capita, PPP (constant 2011 prices, United States dollars)*		*Human development index*
	2010	*2015*	*2015*	*2010*	*2015*	*2014*
Tajikistan	5 642	7 779	4.20	2 123	2 616	0.624
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	9 407	10 587	3.67	11 394	12 725	0.747
Turkmenistan	22 583	37 254	6.50	10 032	15 527	0.688
Uganda	20 182	26 277	5.04	1 554	1 718	0.483
Uzbekistan	39 333	58 114	8.00	4 185	5 643	0.675
Zambia	20 266	26 347	1.65	3 277	3 658	0.586
Zimbabwe	9 422	12 785	1.07	1 389	1 688	0.509
Landlocked developing countries, average	**17 253**	**22 850**	**3.67**	**4 024**	**4 770**	**0.565**

Source: United Nations Development Programme, World Bank.
Abbreviations: GDP, gross domestic product; PPP, purchasing power parity.

Table 2
Selected infrastructure indicators

	Railways (km)	*Mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 people)*		*Internet users (per 100 people)*		*Access to electricity (percentage of population)*	
	2014	*2013*	*2014*	*2013*	*2014*	*2010*	*2012*
Afghanistan	..	70.7	74.9	5.9	6.4	41.0	43.0
Armenia	826	112.4	115.9	41.9	46.3	99.8	100.0
Azerbaijan	2 068	107.6	110.9	58.7	61.0	100.0	100.0
Bhutan	..	72.2	82.1	29.9	34.4	72.0	75.6
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	3 652	97.7	96.3	36.9	39.0	80.2	90.5
Botswana	888	160.6	167.3	15.0	18.5	43.1	53.2
Burkina Faso	622	66.4	71.7	9.1	9.4	13.1	13.1
Burundi	..	25.0	30.5	1.3	1.4	5.3	6.5
Central African Republic	..	29.5	24.5	3.5	4.0	9.5	10.8
Chad	..	35.6	39.8	2.3	2.5	3.5	6.4
Ethiopia	..	27.3	31.6	1.9	2.9	23.0	26.6
Kazakhstan	14 329	184.7	172.2	54.0	54.9	100.0	100.0

	Railways (km)	*Mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 people)*		*Internet users (per 100 people)*		*Access to electricity (percentage of population)*	
	2014	*2013*	*2014*	*2013*	*2014*	*2010*	*2012*
Kyrgyzstan	417	121.4	134.5	23.0	28.3	100.0	100.0
Lao People's Democratic Republic	..	68.1	67.0	12.5	14.3	66.0	70.0
Lesotho	..	86.3	85.0	5.0	11.0	17.0	20.6
Malawi	797	32.3	33.5	5.1	5.8	8.7	9.8
Mali	593	129.1	149.0	3.5	7.0	16.6	25.6
Mongolia	1 818	101.4	105.0	20.0	27.0	86.2	89.8
Nepal	59	76.8	81.9	13.3	15.4	76.3	76.3
Niger	..	39.3	44.4	1.7	2.0	9.3	14.4
Paraguay	36	103.7	105.6	36.9	43.0	97.4	98.2
Republic of Moldova	1 157	106.0	108.0	45.0	46.6	98.6	100.0
Rwanda	..	56.8	64.0	9.0	10.6	10.8	18.0
South Sudan	..	25.3	24.5	14.1	15.9	1.5	5.1
Swaziland	300	71.5	72.3	24.7	27.1	35.2	42.0
Tajikistan	621	91.8	95.1	16.0	17.5	100.0	100.0
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	699	106.2	105.5	65.2	68.1	99.0	100.0
Turkmenistan	4 980	116.9	135.8	9.6	12.2	100.0	100.0
Uganda	320	48.1	52.4	16.2	17.7	14.6	18.2
Uzbekistan	4 192	74.3	78.4	38.2	43.6	100.0	100.0
Zambia	1 248	71.5	67.3	15.4	17.3	18.5	22.1
Zimbabwe	3 077	96.3	80.8	18.5	19.9	36.9	40.5
Landlocked developing countries	**42 699**	**82.2**	**84.9**	**20.4**	**22.8**	**42.2**	**55.5**

Source. World Bank, International Telecommunication Union.

Table 3
International trade, merchandise exports and imports

Landlocked developing countries	*Total exports (millions of United States dollars)* *2015*	*Total imports (millions of United States dollars)* *2015*	*Trade (percentage of GDP)* *2015*	*Share of exports in global exports (percentage)* *2015*	*Concentration index* *2014*
Afghanistan	470	5 571	53.2	0.003	0.31
Armenia	1 487	3 254	71.0	0.009	0.22
Azerbaijan	14 500	9 400	72.6	0.088	0.86
Bhutan	585	1 170	116.0	0.004	0.36
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	8 261	9 602	..	0.050	0.47
Botswana	6 141	6 348	99.2	0.037	0.82
Burkina Faso	2 132	2 647	68.7	0.013	0.47
Burundi	111	755	40.0	0.001	0.36
Central African Republic	90	348	39.5	0.001	0.36
Chad	2 900	2 200	67.2	0.018	0.91
Ethiopia	3 825	19 063	37.2	0.023	0.31
Kazakhstan	45 726	30 186	53.3	0.277	0.67
Kyrgyzstan	1 676	4 070	..	0.010	0.17
Lao People's Democratic Republic	2 340	3 860	79.0	0.014	0.28
Lesotho	775	1 954	..	0.005	0.39
Malawi	1 375	2 932	61.9	0.008	0.48
Mali	2 532	3 167	50.7	0.015	0.52
Mongolia	4 670	3 797	87.0	0.028	0.48
Nepal	720	6 380	53.2	0.004	0.15
Niger	1 050	1 990	56.6	0.006	0.43
Paraguay	8 361	10 291	82.1	0.051	0.33
Republic of Moldova	1 967	3 987	117.2	0.012	0.15
Rwanda	659	2 570	45.3	0.004	0.44
South Sudan	..	..	67.4	..	..
Swaziland	1 697	1 432	..	0.010	0.27
Tajikistan	900	3 400	..	0.005	0.41
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	4 490	6 400	113.3	0.027	0.19

Landlocked developing countries	Total exports (millions of United States dollars) 2015	Total imports (millions of United States dollars) 2015	Trade (percentage of GDP) 2015	Share of exports in global exports (percentage) 2015	Concentration index 2014
Turkmenistan	14 000	7 800	..	0.085	0.76
Uganda	2 245	5 780	46.9	0.014	0.19
Uzbekistan	13 000	14 000	42.8	0.079	0.28
Zambia	6 961	8 451	..	0.042	0.61
Zimbabwe	2 716	4 000	75.0	0.016	0.31
Landlocked developing countries	**158 359**	**186 805**	**67.9**	**0.961**	**0.36**

Source: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, World Bank.
Note: 2015 data are mostly estimated.
Abbreviation: GDP, gross domestic product.

Table 4
Value-added share of manufacturing, agriculture and services and share of primary commodities in merchandise exports

Landlocked developing countries	Value added share of manufacturing (percentage of GDP) 2015	Value added share of agriculture (percentage of GDP) 2015	Value added share of services (percentage of GDP) 2015	Exports of primary commodities, precious stones and non-monetary gold (percentage of total merchandise exports) 2000-2010	2014
Afghanistan	12.8	22.6	55.0	66.1	65.8
Armenia	10.2	19.4	51.9	65.3	78.9
Azerbaijan	5.8	6.8	56.2	94.8	97.2
Bhutan	8.3	17.1	40.9	49.0	37.6
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	..	..	..	89.9	96.3
Botswana	6.3	2.4	64.2	87.9	94.7
Burkina Faso	6.2	32.9	45.2	91.4	91.8
Burundi	9.6	42.9	40.4	88.6	76.8
Central African Republic	7.6	47.5	38.8	94.0	92.2
Chad	2.9	52.4	33.4	97.6	98.9
Ethiopia	4.1	41.0	42.8	88.6	89.4
Kazakhstan	10.8	5.0	61.8	86.8	90.4
Kyrgyzstan	13.7	15.9	57.1	60.1	54.9
Lao People's Democratic Republic	9.3	27.2	41.9	71.1	84.0

Landlocked developing countries	*Value added share of manufacturing (percentage of GDP)*	*Value added share of agriculture (percentage of GDP)*	*Value added share of services (percentage of GDP)*	*Exports of primary commodities, precious stones and non-monetary gold (percentage of total merchandise exports)*	
	2015	*2015*	*2015*	*2000-2010*	*2014*
Lesotho	..	..	..	20.4	43.9
Malawi	10.6	29.3	54.5	88.8	83.8
Mali	..	41.0	39.8	91.2	87.8
Mongolia	9.1	14.8	51.1	87.5	97.7
Nepal	6.5	32.8	51.6	29.3	27.0
Niger	5.7	36.4	37.3	69.6	71.7
Paraguay	11.8	18.5	52.2	88.5	91.0
Republic of Moldova	14.0	13.8	68.2	47.7	46.8
Rwanda	4.8	32.7	47.5	88.0	84.9
South Sudan	..	..	..	..	..
Swaziland	37.9	6.9	48.9	40.1	44.8
Tajikistan	..	..	..	84.1	74.5
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	12.3	11.2	62.7	26.6	20.1
Turkmenistan	..	..	..	88.9	94.4
Uganda	8.7	24.7	54.9	77.6	66.6
Uzbekistan	11.2	18.3	47.1	65.4	68.2
Zambia	..	..	..	88.1	82.8
Zimbabwe	11.9	12.5	59.0	73.6	80.7
Landlocked developing countries, average	**6.9**	**14.6**	**43.3**	**82.2**	**86.7**

Source: World Bank, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.
Abbreviation: GDP, gross domestic product.

United Nations A/71/314

General Assembly

Distr.: General
9 August 2016

Original: English

Seventy-first session
Item 69 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Rights of persons with disabilities

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the rights of persons with disabilities, submitted in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 26/20.

* A/71/150.

16-13740 (E) 240816

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Report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the rights of persons with disabilities, Catalina Devandas-Aguilar

Summary

The present report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the rights of persons with disabilities, Catalina Devandas-Aguilar, focuses on disability-inclusive policies. It is submitted to the General Assembly in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 26/20.

In light of the inequality experienced by persons with disabilities worldwide, the Special Rapporteur seeks to provide guidance to States and other actors on how to establish disability-inclusive policies that are in conformity with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and which can contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. To ensure the effectiveness of such policies, which should include non-discrimination, accessibility and support service requirements, States must adopt a clear policy framework for the inclusion of persons with disabilities across all sectors of society.

Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	4
II.	The need for disability-inclusive policies	4
	A. Ensuring inclusive development for all	4
	B. A human rights-based approach to disability-inclusive policies	5
	C. The economic case for disability-inclusive policies	6
III.	Key components of disability-inclusive policies	8
	A. Non-discrimination	9
	B. Accessibility	12
	C. Assistive technologies and support services	14
IV.	Implementing disability-inclusive policy frameworks	18
	A. General considerations	18
	B. Mainstreaming	19
	C. Participation	19
	D. Monitoring	20
	E. Budgeting	21
	F. Data collection	21
	G. Embracing diversity	22
V.	Conclusions and recommendations	22

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 26/20, the Human Rights Council requested the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the rights of persons with disabilities to report annually to the General Assembly.

2. In the present report, the Special Rapporteur provides a study focusing on disability-inclusive policies, which are a prerequisite for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Special Rapporteur explains the complementary and mutually reinforcing nature of those two instruments and how, through inclusive policy frameworks, they can effectively contribute to fighting poverty and exclusion among persons with disabilities.

3. The disability-inclusive policy framework presented in the report builds on previous recommendations by the Special Rapporteur, contained in her reports on the participation of persons with disabilities in decision-making (A/HRC/31/62) and on the need for inclusive social protection systems (A/70/297), to enable the participation of persons with disabilities in social and economic development. Those recommendations are aimed at building societies and institutions that embrace persons with disabilities, as well as all other members of society, on an equal basis, as part of human diversity.

4. In preparing her report, the Special Rapporteur analysed some 90 responses to a questionnaire sent to Member States, national human rights institutions and civil society organizations, including representative organizations of persons with disabilities, whose main trends are reflected in the text.[1]

II. The need for disability-inclusive policies

A. Ensuring inclusive development for all

5. Inclusive development is essential to ensure that all marginalized and excluded groups participate effectively in development processes. Many people around the world are excluded from the benefits of and prevented from contributing to development because of their age, sex, sexual orientation, race, colour, religion, national or ethnic origin, poverty, disability or other status. The consequences of such exclusion are deepening inequalities across and within countries: around 80 per cent of the world's population has only 6 per cent of the world's wealth, while the richest 1 per cent is likely to have more than 50 per cent in 2016.[2] As Amartya Sen wrote, an important goal of development should be to ensure that everyone enjoys their rights to achieve the capacity and opportunity to be a full member of society.[3] Development should be broad-based enough to benefit all people, as a means both to enhance people's capabilities and choices and to build overall more inclusive, equitable and sustainable societies that promote and protect people's rights.

6. Persons with disabilities experience great inequalities worldwide and are more likely to experience poverty and other forms of social exclusion. They are also less

[1] See www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Disability/SRDisabilities/Pages/disability-inclusivepolicies.aspx.
[2] See United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2015*.
[3] Amartya Sen, *The Idea of Justice* (London, Allen Lane, 2009).

likely to be employed, receive an education, or gain access to public services. Moreover, they are more likely to be the victims of violence and contract HIV/AIDS.[4] Deaf persons, hard of hearing persons, deaf-blind persons, autistic persons and persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities, among other groups, face additional challenges in accessing essential services, such as health care, education or justice, owing to existing discriminatory legal and policy frameworks, segregated facilities and/or the lack of support, including support services.

7. Discussions on inclusive development often overlook the particular and wide-ranging barriers that persons with disabilities face in participating in society. They include physical barriers that prevent access to public spaces, workplaces and modes of transportation; barriers to information and communication (such as the lack of sign language interpretation, written information, screen readers, Braille and easy-to-read formats); institutional barriers that come in the form of programme design (for example, linking disability benefits to the inability to work); and attitudinal barriers that lead to discrimination and/or misconceptions about the rights and abilities of persons with disabilities.

8. Disability-inclusive policies are critical to removing those barriers, by enabling the conditions and support necessary that persons with disabilities may require to participate in and benefit from development outcomes and processes. That means considering disability-related issues in all public policies and programmes and enabling the participation of persons with disabilities through their design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Disability-inclusive policies entail a full range of policies, designed with persons with disabilities in mind, that take into account the environment in which people live and how it interacts with any impairment people may have. When adequately implemented, such policies can contribute to removing the barriers to participation that persons with disabilities face.

9. The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, which contain several references to persons with disabilities, represents an exceptional opportunity for States to design and implement disability-inclusive policies for the next 15 years, as they review their national development plans to align them to the Goals. Nonetheless, while there is an international commitment to "leave no one behind" and a consensus that no goal should be met unless it is met for everyone, it remains unclear how those promises will be translated into practice by State officials and policymakers worldwide, particularly in relation to persons with disabilities; hence the need for guidance on how to design and implement disability-inclusive policies and ensure that all the Goals and their related targets benefit persons with disabilities.

B. A human rights-based approach to disability-inclusive policies

10. Inclusive development cannot be effectively achieved in the absence of a human rights framework. A human rights-based approach, as a conceptual

[4] See World Health Organization (WHO) and World Bank, *World Disability Report* (2011); and Pierre De Beaudrap, Muriel Mac-Seing, and Estelle Pasquier, "Disability and HIV: a systematic review and a meta-analysis of the risk of HIV infection among adults with disabilities in Sub-Saharan Africa", *AIDS Care*, vol. 26, No. 12 (July 2014).

framework, offers practical guidance for the design, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of development policies and programmes based on international human rights standards.[5] Development efforts should uphold and promote basic human rights principles, such as respect for human dignity, non-discrimination, participation and accountability. Thus, a human rights-based approach to development requires that disability-inclusive policies consider the demands and needs of persons with disabilities.

11. A human rights-based approach to disability is also required to achieve the inclusion of persons with disabilities in development. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities represents a major paradigm shift in the approach to persons with disabilities from both a human rights and a development perspective. The dual nature of the Convention reinforces the idea that human rights and development are inextricably linked. In that regard, it is a valuable development tool that calls for inclusive policies and programmes, inclusive international cooperation and a participatory approach to policymaking. Accordingly, policy efforts should move away from the charitable and medical approaches towards a human rights-based approach to disability, where persons with disabilities are considered as rights holders, rather than as mere receivers of protection, rehabilitation and/or welfare. Development policies should not undermine the rights of persons with disabilities or contribute to their social exclusion. Moreover, the structural barriers that cause their exclusion and poverty cannot be addressed without the direct involvement and participation of persons with disabilities. That requires a profound change in the way many States, development agencies and other organizations currently operate worldwide.

12. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are complementary and mutually reinforcing instruments crucial to guaranteeing the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in society. Whereas the Convention can offer normative guidance for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals can contribute to the effective realization of the human rights of persons with disabilities. In that regard, the Special Rapporteur welcomes the efforts of the United Nations and its mechanisms, including the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to integrate the 2030 Agenda into its work to promote the rights of persons with disabilities. In particular, the Special Rapporteur commends the initiative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to develop guidance tools for States, national human rights institutions and civil society on how to implement and monitor the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level, in line with the Convention and the development of human rights indicators for the Convention, linked to the Goals, to measure progress in its implementation.

C. The economic case for disability-inclusive policies

13. There is a growing consensus that poverty affects persons with disabilities in a disproportionate manner, a correlation that is deeper than it first appears. In fact, while many studies recognize the link between poverty and disability, too often they

[5] See Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Frequently asked questions on a human rights-based approach to development cooperation" (2006).

do not consider the direct and indirect extra costs of living with a disability. Direct costs include the extra expenses for disability-specific items, such as assistive devices and personal assistance, and greater expenditure for general services, such as medical care and transportation. Indirect costs include lost benefits or opportunity costs, such as the loss of income of persons with disabilities or of their family members who cannot work, or work less, if the household includes one or more persons with disabilities (see A/70/297). A recent and growing body of literature estimates that those costs can amount to some 30 per cent of a country's average wages.[6] When those costs are taken into account, in practice the standard of living of many persons with disabilities who are technically not below the poverty line, is inferior to that of people who are considered poor. For example, after taking into consideration the costs of disability in Viet Nam, the poverty rate for persons with disabilities increased from some 17 to 23 per cent.[7]

14. Furthermore, household poverty rates do not consider the allocation of resources within a household. Evidence shows that persons with disabilities often do not get a share of their household's resources. For instance, if resources are tight, parents may pay for the education of their non-disabled children but not for those with a disability.[8] Studies using multidimensional indices of poverty therefore show a greater poverty gap between persons with and without disabilities.[9] All those considerations need to be taken into account to fight poverty among persons with disabilities and to achieve the goal of ending poverty in all its forms everywhere.

15. The cost of exclusion is significant not only for persons with disabilities and their families, but also for a country's economy. When persons with disabilities face barriers to participation, they are less likely to be able to work and thus contribute less to the economy. Even when they do work, they tend to earn less than their non-disabled peers because of their more limited access to education (including higher education), good quality jobs and loans to start businesses. A study by the International Labour Organization in 2009 estimated that the cost of excluding persons with disabilities could amount to between 1 and 7 per cent of a country's gross domestic product.[10] Those percentages might actually be understated, as they do not consider the costs of the reduced work time and wages of family members

[6] See, for example, J. Cullinan, B. Gannon and S. Lyons, "Estimating the extra cost of living for people with disabilities", *Health Economics*, vol. 20, No. 5 (May 2011); Wiebke Kuklys, *Amartya Sen's Capability Approach: Theoretical Insights and Empirical Applications* (Springer, 2005); Asghar Zaidi and Tania Burchardt, "Comparing incomes when needs differ: equivalization for the extra costs of disability in the UK", *The Review of Income and Wealth*, vol. 51, No. 1 (March 2005).

[7] Daniel Mont and Nguyen Viet Cuon, "Disability and poverty in Vietnam", *The World Bank Economic Review*, vol. 25, No. 2 (May 2011).

[8] Maria Fernanda Rosales-Rueda, "Family investment responses to childhood health conditions: intrafamily allocation of resources", *Journal of Health Economics*, vol. 37 (September 2014).

[9] See, for example, Sophie Mitra, Aleksandra Posarac and Brandon Vick, "Disability and poverty in developing countries: a multidimensional study", *World Development*, vol. 41 (January 2013); Jean-François Trani, Mario Biggeri and Vincenzo Mauro, "The multidimensionality of child poverty: evidence from Afghanistan", *Social Indicators Research*, vol. 112, No. 2 (June 2013); and Jean-François Trani and Mitchell Loeb, "Poverty and disability: a vicious circle? Evidence from Afghanistan and Zambia", *Journal of International Development*, vol. 24, No. S1 (January 2012).

[10] Sebastian Buckup, "The price of exclusion: the economic consequences of excluding people with disabilities from the world of work", International Labour Organization Employment Working Paper No. 43 (2009).

who are responsible for caring for relatives with disabilities, owing to a lack of support or the barrier-free environment that persons with disabilities need to be more independent;[11] nor do they take into account the future lost earnings of children without disabilities who forego some education because of increased responsibilities at home.[12]

16. Furthermore, it is impossible to measure the loss to society of excluding the talents and perspectives of persons with disabilities. Whether it is in the sciences, the arts or industry, persons with disabilities have much to contribute to society that goes unrealized when they are not given the opportunity to participate. A recently published history of autism shows how a growing understanding of the capacities of persons with disabilities and the efforts to break down barriers to participation can unleash major contributions to society.[13]

III. Key components of disability-inclusive policies

17. There are many elements to be considered in implementing disability-inclusive policies at the national level. While full inclusion cannot happen overnight, any State can begin by taking positive and meaningful action towards creating more inclusive societies. That entails changing the way in which State officials and policymakers think about persons with disabilities and establishing a policy framework that is responsive to their demands and needs. In that regard, the present report aims to raise awareness and call the attention of States to the most pressing issues when designing and implementing any policy.

18. The initial step towards establishing an inclusive policy framework involves three key aspects. First, the existence of a non-discrimination framework that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all areas of life and ensures that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities. Second, accessibility is a requirement that must be set up to enable persons with disabilities to access and enjoy all programmes and services and to participate fully and independently in society. Third, the availability of services and the provision of assistive devices that support the autonomy and inclusion of persons with disabilities, allowing them to benefit from all policies and programmes on an equal basis with others.

19. Policymakers and other public officials must take those three aspects into account when designing and implementing any public policy or programme, as they are indispensable for addressing the specific demands and needs of persons with disabilities. Furthermore, such components can significantly improve the effectiveness and efficiency of development policies and programmes, not only for persons with disabilities, but for the general population as well.

20. In taking such steps, the cross-cutting nature of disability must be recognized. Given that disability affects every aspect of a person's life, unless inclusion is

[11] See M. Palmer and others, "The economic lives of people with disabilities in Vietnam", *PloS ONE*, vol. 10, No. 7 (July 2015).

[12] See, for example, Daniel Mont and Cuong Nguyen, "Does parental disability matter to child education? Evidence from Vietnam", *World Development*, vol. 48 (August 2013).

[13] See Steve Silberman, *Neurotribes: The Legacy of Autism and the Future of Neurodiversity* (New York, Avery, 2015).

promoted in all areas of life it will not be fully effective. For example, inclusive vocational training requires inclusive employment and both require accessible transportation. Similarly, access to justice will not be granted to persons with disabilities if their legal capacity is not fully recognized. As all human rights are indivisible and interdependent, the denial of one right necessarily compromises the enjoyment of others. A coordinated approach to policymaking must therefore take into account all the above components and address the multiple aspects of the lives of persons with disabilities.

21. Importantly, a disability-inclusive and human rights-based approach to policy development should be adopted from the start in order to avoid future amendments. Disability-inclusive policies and programmes should not be the result of "after the facts" add-ons, adjustments or accommodations, as those may benefit only some persons with disabilities. While they may be appropriate in the short run, as long as they do not create new segregated structures, to ensure full participation all policies and programmes must be designed from the outset with the entire population in mind.

A. Non-discrimination

22. States have an obligation under international human rights law to ensure that their legal and policy frameworks do not discriminate on the basis of disability and therefore must guarantee that all persons with disabilities can access and benefit from them on an equal basis with others.[14] The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities addresses non-discrimination as a cross-cutting issue. Article 2 of the Convention defines discrimination on the basis of disability very broadly to cover all forms of disability-based discrimination, including direct and indirect discrimination, discrimination by association and the denial of reasonable accommodation. Article 3 includes non-discrimination and equality of opportunity as general principles of the Convention. Article 4 (1) (b) and (c) requires States to repeal any legislation, regulations, customs and practices that constitute discrimination against persons with disabilities, including discrimination by private actors. Article 5 calls on States to adopt robust anti-discrimination legal frameworks prohibiting all forms of discrimination on the basis of disability and guaranteeing to all persons with disabilities equal and effective legal protection against discrimination on all grounds.

23. While most States have non-discrimination provisions in their legislation, including in their constitutions, disability is not always mentioned as a ground of discrimination and often, when included, is only considered in particular areas, such as employment. In line with human rights law in general and with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities specifically, persons with disabilities should be protected from all forms of discrimination in all aspects of their lives and States should include disability as a ground of discrimination in all their legislation,

[14] See the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 7; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, articles 2 (1) and 26; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, article 2 (2); Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, articles 1 and 2; Convention on the Rights of the Child, articles 2 and 23; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, articles 2, 3 (b), 4 (1) (b) and (e), and 5; and International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, articles 1 (1) and 7.

including civil, administrative, criminal and procedural law. Since in most countries the constitution and constitutional law are at the top of the hierarchy of norms, constitutional provisions constitute a useful tool for protecting persons with disabilities against discrimination.

24. Article 5 (3) of the Convention requires States to take all appropriate steps to ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities, whenever that is needed in a particular case. That means providing all the necessary and appropriate modifications and adjustments to accommodate a person's individual characteristics or differences, so as to ensure that persons with disabilities can enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including in accessing infrastructures, programmes and services, on an equal basis with others. According to article 2 of the Convention, that duty extends to persons who are associated with a person with disabilities (for example, agreeing to a flexible working hours schedule for a person who cares for a child with disabilities) and should not impose a disproportionate or undue burden on the duty-bearer, be it the State or a private entity. States must clearly establish in their legal and policy frameworks that the denial of reasonable accommodation constitutes discrimination on the basis of disability.

25. States must acknowledge that they have an immediate duty to provide reasonable accommodation, as the right to non-discrimination is not subject to progressive realization (see A/70/297). While ensuring comprehensive accessibility and sustainable, consistent support services will not happen overnight, it is critical to apply the principle of non-discrimination immediately, including the provision of reasonable accommodation, so that persons with disabilities can access and benefit from development policies and programmes right away.

26. The practical implementation of the duty of States to provide reasonable accommodation remains a challenge. Existing legislation in a number of States maintains definitions of reasonable accommodation that are narrower than the one provided for in article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Moreover, some States lack practical guidance on how to provide it and/or on how to assess cases of disproportionate or undue burden, which limits the provision of that right. Contributions to the present report illustrate the fact that many States do not consider earmarking funds for the implementation of reasonable accommodation by the relevant public institutions and thus resort to the budget for ordinary operations, which are often limited and underfunded. Furthermore, budgetary frameworks do not usually provide for a flexible mechanism to respond to immediate requests for reasonable accommodation. Hence, States should not only ensure the provision of accommodation in line with the Convention, but also allocate sufficient earmarked funds for that purpose and train its public officials to ensure effective implementation.

27. States need to take all necessary measures to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability by any person, organization or private enterprise, including private schools, health-care providers, employers and providers of goods and services. Contributions to the present report illustrate that, in many cases, the non-discrimination provisions for persons with disabilities, in particular the duty of States to provide reasonable accommodation, applied exclusively to public entities, could not thus be invoked in cases of discrimination by private actors. States must

enforce the provision of reasonable accommodation in both the public and private sectors.

28. Ensuring access to justice and effective remedies for victims of discrimination, whether through judicial or non-judicial proceedings, is essential for the enforcement of non-discrimination frameworks. Persons with disabilities are often denied access to justice on an equal basis with others for a variety of reasons, including denial of their legal capacity, lack of awareness of their rights, unaffordability, inaccessibility and absence of procedural accommodation. In many States, the national human rights institution or an equality body is mandated to examine allegations of discrimination, with different levels of powers and competences. While in some cases those institutions can impose sanctions and redress, in others they are only able to issue non-binding recommendations. In such contexts, judicial remedies should complement the work of national human rights institutions and equality bodies.

29. States might also consider adopting specific measures to accelerate or achieve de facto equality of persons with disabilities, in order to increase their participation in different areas, such as education, employment or political participation, as foreseen in article 5 (4) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. For instance, many States have already implemented positive measures or affirmative actions, in particular employment quotas, to combat discrimination against persons with disabilities at work. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that in the absence of human rights-based public policies oriented to combating the structural disadvantages faced by persons with disabilities, the impact of those positive measures will be insufficient to prompt a change towards more inclusive societies.

30. States need to pay attention to the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by persons with disabilities. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognizes the significance of such forms of discrimination, particularly in relation to women and children with disabilities, since they are at a higher risk of discrimination and exclusion (see subparagraph (p) of the preamble and articles 6 and 7). In the design and implementation of public policies and programmes, States must acknowledge the situation of the most marginalized groups among persons with disabilities, such as women, youth, older persons, indigenous persons, persons with psychosocial disabilities, persons with intellectual disabilities, autistic persons and deaf-blind persons (see, for example, CRPD/C/SVK/CO/1 and CRPD/C/AUS/CO/1). To be inclusive, policies and programmes must respond to the needs of those heterogeneous groups.

31. As with racism, sexism, ageism and xenophobia, ableism is a prevalent problem in all societies that must be acknowledged and contested. The assumption that persons with disabilities have less value than others lies at the root of many problematic policies and programmes related to persons with disabilities. However, whereas other forms of intolerance are increasingly challenged by public opinion, ableist ways of thinking usually legitimize the rhetoric behind different forms of discrimination against persons with disabilities. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities carries an enormous potential to challenge negative assumptions regarding persons with disabilities and to foster respect for their rights and dignity. To combat ableism, States must respect and embrace diversity by promoting awareness throughout society of the capabilities and contributions of persons with disabilities and accepting them as part of human diversity.

B. Accessibility

32. Accessibility is a requirement to build barrier-free, inclusive societies where people can live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life and in their communities. Without access to the physical environment, transportation and information and communications, persons with disabilities cannot exercise their rights, participate in and benefit from development programmes and policies. All physical infrastructures, including buildings, transport systems, public spaces and any other facilities, should be designed in a way that they can be fully accessed and used by persons with disabilities. That includes not only entrances, hallways, rooms, restrooms and emergency evacuation routes, but also furniture and devices available for public use, such as elevators, counters, blackboards and cash machines. All information and communications should also be designed in an accessible manner, including signage, announcements, documents and television and radio broadcasts. When accessible information and communications are not available, a range of persons with different disabilities cannot effectively benefit from public policies and programmes.

33. According to articles 3 (f) and 9 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, States have an international obligation to take appropriate measures to ensure access to persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications, including information technologies and systems, and other facilities and services open or provided to the public, be they public or private, in urban, remote and rural settings. Such measures must include the identification and elimination of all existing barriers in the implementation of policies and programmes. General comment No. 2 (2014) on accessibility of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities provides useful guidance on implementing those obligations.

34. The principle of universal design is fundamental to achieving full accessibility. Universal design implies that products and environments are designed to be usable by everyone, to the greatest extent possible without the need for adaptation or specialized design. Accessibility can therefore be achieved, not merely by retrofitting existing infrastructure, but by applying the principles of universal design, where programmes, policies and infrastructures are designed with the full range of human diversity and capabilities in mind. As the Committee made clear in its general comment No. 2, universal design makes societies accessible for all individuals, not only for persons with disabilities.

35. In order to ensure consistency and progress effectively towards full accessibility, States should establish national standards and regulations on accessibility and universal design, including on access to information and communications technologies, in order to provide clear guidance for those designing and implementing policies and programmes. Such standards do not need be developed from scratch. The International Organization for Standardization has published an accessibility guide and model standards.[15] Similarly, the International Telecommunication Union has developed guidelines and recommendations related to the accessibility of telecommunications and information and communications

[15] ISO/IEC, "Guide no. 71 for addressing accessibility in standards" (2014).

technologies for persons with disabilities. All those standards can be adapted to country-specific contexts.[16]

36. Although many States have accessibility standards and/or guidelines in place, often they are not compulsory or only meet the needs of persons with physical impairments. Significant gaps remain in relation to particular groups, such as blind persons, deaf persons, persons with intellectual disabilities and autistic persons, particularly in the area of information and communications. For example, most public sector websites are not accessible. Contributions to the present report show that standards and regulations on accessibility are fragmented by sector, which tends to hinder effective coordination between different institutions, departments or companies in charge of their implementation. National standards and regulations on accessibility and universal design should be designed in close cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, including representative organizations of persons with disabilities, and in accordance with existing international standards in order to ensure interoperability across countries.[17]

37. While universal design should be incorporated in all new infrastructures, programmes and services, full accessibility cannot be implemented overnight. In the interim, it is therefore important to develop strategies and time-bound action plans to make public and private facilities and services accessible for persons with disabilities. Whereas retrofitting all structures in the short term may not be feasible, requiring that all new constructions and renovations follow accessibility and universal design standards has limited cost implications. Estimates indicate that it would only add about 1 per cent to construction costs.[18]

38. Funding for reasonable accommodations to ensure short-term case-by-case solutions to enable access is also important. An example would be providing a portable ramp to a student using a wheelchair in an inaccessible school. Although that measure would remove the barrier for that individual, it does not make the environment more inclusive. As such, it is a stop-gap measure that must be accompanied by a time-bound plan to make the programmes and services fully inclusive. The lack of accessibility cannot be invoked as an excuse by States to avoid their obligation to ensure access to the existing physical environment, transportation, information and communications and services. In such cases, reasonable accommodations must be provided.

39. The enforcement of accessibility regulations and standards needs to be improved in many States. Contributions to the present report highlight a low level of implementation of accessibility policies or programmes worldwide. Accessibility enforcement mechanisms are often the responsibility of local governmental authorities, but many of them have no monitoring capacity. In addition, regulations for the conservation of heritage buildings are very often invoked to justify

[16] At the regional level, the European Union is currently drafting a common directive for web accessibility that, along with the European Accessibility Act, will ensure a common set of accessibility requirements within the European Union. Inclusion Europe has also produced standards to make information easy to read and understand, available from www.easy-to-read.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/EN_Information_for_all.pdf.

[17] See Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, general comment No. 2.

[18] See Edward Steinfeld, "Education for all: the cost of accessibility", World Bank Education Notes (2005); and United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, "Americans with Disabilities Act: questions and answers", available from www.ada.gov/qandaeng.htm.

non-compliance by a State with accessibility regulations and thus old buildings remain inaccessible to persons with disabilities.

40. To address the widespread lack of enforcement, accessibility requirements should be established for general buildings, transportation and web regulations, as well as other statutory technical regulations. Similarly, authorizations and licences to build or alter existing structures and services should require the implementation of accessibility standards. States should also incorporate accessibility requirements into their public procurement policies and procedures and into their national public investment systems. For example, directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and the Council on public procurement takes into account accessibility criteria for persons with disabilities.[19]

41. Private services provided to the public and entities open to the same must also meet appropriate accessibility standards. That includes service providers, such as private schools and medical facilities, and private businesses, such as stores or cinemas. Any facility or entity designed to serve the public at large, in particular public services, must be accessible. As most service providers and business owners are not aware of accessibility standards and the varied needs of persons with disabilities, States must provide clear guidance and support on how to address them. Financial support to improve accessibility and training to achieve compliance should be considered alongside enforcement.[20]

42. States should invest in awareness-raising and education programmes on the implementation of accessibility requirements. Well-elaborated standards and guidelines are useless unless they are known and understood by those who need to apply them. That implies sensitization and training for State authorities, policymakers and planners. Accessibility and universal design should also be incorporated into the curricula of technology institutes and universities for all careers in the areas of design, architecture, construction and engineering.

C. Assistive technologies and support services

43. While achieving full accessibility of the general environment and of government programmes will significantly improve the participation of persons with disabilities, it is still insufficient. The availability of affordable assistive and support services is vital for many persons with disabilities, especially the poor, to be able to fully access and benefit from policies and programmes on an equal basis with others. For many persons with disabilities, access to such goods and services constitutes a precondition for the respect of their inherent dignity and the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

44. Assistive devices and technologies have the primary purpose of allowing individuals to perform an activity they would otherwise be unable to do, or increase

[19] The directive provides, inter alia, that for all procurement intended for use by natural persons, the technical specifications shall, except in duly justified cases, be drawn up so as to take into account accessibility criteria for persons with disabilities or design for all users.

[20] See National Council on Disability, "Implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act: challenges, best practices, and new opportunities for success" (2007).

the ease and safety with which those activities are performed.[21] In the case of children with disabilities, they have a significant impact on their early childhood development and educational outcome, reducing the need for other types of support. Common examples of assistive devices include wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, prostheses, orthoses, adapted cutlery, extendable reaching devices and adaptive switches for persons with physical impairments; hearing aids, assistive hearing technology, alarm devices, amplified telephones, deaf-blind communicators; spectacles, magnifiers, white canes, voice recognition software, Braille displays and screen readers for persons with visual impairments; communication boards and speech synthesizers for persons with communication needs; and computers and visual and talking timers for persons with intellectual impairments. Assistive devices and technologies range from low-cost solutions to high-tech gadgets.

45. According to articles 20, 26 (3) and 28 (2) (a) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, States have an obligation to promote the availability, knowledge and use of assistive devices and technologies for persons with disabilities.[22] Article 20 (b) requires States to take effective measures to facilitate the access of persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, to mobility aids, devices, assistive technologies and forms of live assistance and intermediaries. Those measures must include making them available at no or an affordable cost. Moreover, as part of their general obligations, States should undertake or promote research and development of, and promote the availability and use of, devices and assistive technologies suitable for persons with disabilities, giving priority to technologies at an affordable cost (article 4 (1) (g)). They should also provide accessible information to persons with disabilities about mobility aids, devices and assistive technologies, including new technologies, as well as other forms of assistance, support services and facilities (article 4 (1) (h)). Despite those obligations, in many developing countries only 5 to 15 per cent of those in need of assistive devices and technologies are able to obtain them.

46. States should take into consideration several elements in the provision of assistive devices and technologies in order to ensure their effective distribution and use.[21] Many persons with disabilities and their families do not know about the existence of assistive products and services. In many countries, assistive devices and technologies are produced on a very small scale or not at all. When available, assistive technology services are often delivered in limited numbers and/or in major cities, far away from where most persons with disabilities live. Moreover, persons with disabilities are rarely given the opportunity to choose the most appropriate assistive device for their specific needs or environment. The provision of assistive devices and technologies therefore needs to be an integral part of rehabilitation and habilitation services, so as to ensure that there are referral systems that provide proper fitting and/or customization and instructions on proper usage, maintenance and repair. Guidelines for the appropriate provision and distribution of assistive devices and technologies should also be considered, as well as proper training for

[21] WHO and the United Nations Children's Fund use "assistive technology" as an umbrella term for both assistive devices and related services. See, for example, the discussion paper on assistive technologies for children with disabilities, available from www.unicef.org/disabilities/files/Assistive-Tech-Web.pdf.

[22] See also Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, general comment No. 5 (1994) on persons with disabilities, para. 33, and Committee on the Rights of the Child, general comment No. 9 (2006) on the rights of children with disabilities, paras. 20 and 65.

personnel working in the area. Above all, systems should be structured in a way that promotes the empowerment and choices of persons with disabilities.[23]

47. As stated earlier, some assistive devices and technologies can be costly, especially in low-income countries. Unless they are provided for free or subsidized, many persons with disabilities will not be able to afford them.[21] In that regard, States should consider a number of measures to ensure affordability. First, assistive devices and technologies should be included in the coverage of national health insurance and/or social protection schemes. Based on the World Health Organization (WHO) priority assistive products list, States should develop a list of essential assistive products according to their national needs and available resources.[24] Second, States should also consider waiving import duties and taxes on assistive devices and technologies that are not produced within the country. Finally, States should support local businesses that build and design assistive devices through grants, loans and tax credits. Whether incorporated into existing programmes or provided through new, separate programmes, the provision of assistive devices should be subsidized to the maximum extent of the available resources of States, as required by articles 4 and 28 (2) (a) of the Convention.

48. Different forms of assistance and support services are required by some persons with disabilities to live and fully participate in the community, with choices equal to others. Article 19 (b) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities requires States to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services necessary to support living and inclusion in the community and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community. Those support services include personal assistance, support in decision-making, communications support (readers, sign language interpreters), mobility support (guides, service animals), living arrangement services (housing, household care) and community services. They can be both substitutes for and complements to assistive devices. Very often those services are not covered by health insurance or social protection schemes, even though they can take up a significant proportion of the average person's budget, if they can afford it at all. States should take measures to ensure affordability and guarantee access to those services to the maximum extent of their available resources, to comply with articles 4 and 28 (2) (a), (b) and (c) of the Convention.

49. States should adopt guidelines and criteria to regulate the delivery of assistance and support services, including standards for training and certification. Sign language interpreters, interpreters for deaf-blind persons, personal assistants and other intermediaries should be trained and certified. In the case of sign language interpreters, certification must be in the country's official sign language. Ethical codes of conduct should also be adopted to assist service providers in fulfilling their duties. Representative organizations of persons with disabilities should be consulted and engaged in all such processes.

50. States must also ensure that regardless of the type of service delivery arrangement (direct provision, public-private partnerships, partnerships with community-based or non-governmental organizations), persons with disabilities receive quality services and adequate support. Services should be designed to enable

[23] For examples of more detailed guidance on wheelchairs and other assistive devices, see recent reports of the World Health Organization at www.who.int/disabilities/publications/technology/en/.

[24] See www.who.int/phi/implementation/assistive_technology/low_res_english.pdf?ua=1.

direct choice and the control of users over services providers, including the way in which support should be provided. In some countries, the allocation of personal budgets is the best option to ensure choice and control by persons with disabilities, thus allowing each individual to decide whom to employ and the type of services and support they receive.[25]

51. States should consider integrating as many assistance and support services as possible into their existing policies and programmes. In fact, to access the majority of public education, employment, justice or health programmes and services, many persons with disabilities need some kind of support or assistance. Children with disabilities may need additional support in schools, a person with psychosocial disabilities may require support in applying for disability benefits, a person with intellectual disabilities may need a job coach to access employment.[26] States should budget and plan for such services when designing their policies and programmes.[27]

52. Some disability-specific services may be run as separate programmes. They might comprise, among others, services that promote the autonomy and independence of persons with disabilities by providing information, training on independent living skills and peer counselling. They may also include services to help persons with disabilities in the transition from segregated facilities to living in the community. A good practice for delivering such services is through independent living centres that are run primarily by persons with disabilities. Such centres play a fundamental role, not only in the provision of services, but also in supporting individuals to advocate for inclusion and promoting broader changes at the community level.

53. To the maximum extent possible, States should provide support services and assistive devices and technologies under a community-based approach. That means not only providing relevant services in the community where the person lives, but also ensuring the participation of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes and activities related to the design and provision of those services, as well as recognizing and supporting existing social networks and community resources. In that way, community-based services enable the optimal use of local resources, often with more efficient delivery systems than through other measures. When services are not community-based there is either a drive towards segregation, or those needing such services may have difficulty in accessing them. Additionally, when services are designed in a participatory manner and with the communities in mind, their adequacy and adaptability is increased, which results in responses that are sensitive to geographical, social, economic and cultural issues. In the case of indigenous peoples, such community-based services could be used to avoid the risk of assimilation when providing disability-specific services to indigenous persons with disabilities.

54. Data on the availability of assistive devices, personal assistance and other support services is generally unavailable in low- and middle-income countries. It is important that States periodically conduct a needs assessment to determine and

[25] In Argentina, Law 26.480 provides for a subsidy to hire a personal assistant at home. Costa Rica has also recently adopted a new legal framework for ensuring access to personal assistance.

[26] Peru, for example, is implementing a supported employment programme for persons with intellectual disabilities and autistic persons, who are provided with a job coach to facilitate work placement.

[27] In India, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme for the universalization of elementary education provides a cash grant each year for each child with disabilities to meet certain additional expenses.

address the gaps in the availability of assistive devices and support services, and the effectiveness of that support. That could be done through community-based strategies and surveys.

IV. Implementing disability-inclusive policy frameworks

A. General considerations

55. To ensure the effectiveness of disability-inclusive policies, which should be devised considering accessibility, non-discrimination and support service requirements, States have to adopt a clear policy framework for the inclusion of persons with disabilities across all sectors of society. They must consider adopting a national disability strategy or a national disability action plan for that purpose. Such frameworks may include other specific plans of action on non-discrimination, accessibility and support services.

56. Many States already have such disability-specific frameworks in place. However, such policies are often underfunded, lack benchmark indicators and/or do not include a human rights-based approach to disability. Furthermore, their development and implementation is frequently delegated to a State disability agency with limited resources, or to institutions responsible for health, labour or social protection, without paying due attention to the intersectoral dimension of the rights of persons with disabilities.

57. States need to address the interface between national and subnational levels of governance. In many countries, local governments are directly responsible for the implementation of important public policies in the areas of education, health care, housing, planning, construction and development. The lack of a coordinated response between national and local authorities has a negative impact on the availability and quality of services for persons with disabilities, in particular those living in disadvantaged rural and remote areas. Central Governments must ensure, to the extent of their competencies, adequate funding and technical support for local authorities in order to help them fulfil their functions.

58. International cooperation plays an important role in supporting national efforts for the implementation of disability-inclusive policies.[28] States must undertake appropriate and effective measures to foster international cooperation, including South-South and triangular cooperation, in partnership with organizations of persons with disabilities. The participation of persons with disabilities is essential to ensure that they are both agents and beneficiaries of development aid. The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals constitutes an excellent opportunity for ensuring that international cooperation is inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities.

59. The promotion of gender equality is also a critical aspect to be included in disability-inclusive policies. Men and women with disabilities face different forms of exclusion and discrimination throughout their life cycle and expectations relating to their role within the family, school, workplace and the community also differ greatly and vary widely across countries. While many States have adopted legal frameworks to guarantee equality of rights between women and men, as well as

[28] See Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, article 32 (1) (a).

national gender action plans, only a few have taken concrete action to address the specific needs of women and girls with disabilities, to enhance their participation and to dismantle the barriers they face.

B. Mainstreaming

60. Mainstreaming is essential for securing the inclusion of persons with disabilities in different areas of development. All general policies and programmes must be designed to be as inclusive as possible, in order to not create or perpetuate existing barriers in the environment, be they physical, informational, institutional or attitudinal, and must incorporate a disability perspective into policymaking in all sectors and at all levels of governance. As previously mentioned, that can be accomplished by ensuring non-discrimination, accessibility and support provisions. Mainstream strategies may lead to modifications in the objectives and processes of programmes to ensure that persons with disabilities participate in and benefit from them.

61. Persons with disabilities may have particular needs, which cannot be met by making general programmes inclusive, but which can be remedied by establishing disability-specific programmes. However, given that the needs of persons with disabilities cut across all sectors, they should be pursued in an integrated, coherent and well-coordinated manner, as opposed to through an ad hoc approach. Supplying assistive devices that only persons with disabilities need is one thing, but ensuring their participation in education, water and sanitation, employment, health care, transportation, governance, justice and other areas cannot be achieved without mainstreaming disability everywhere.

62. In the same vein, while the reasons for including persons with disabilities in more specialized or technical areas of government, such as energy, agriculture or climate change, may not seem obvious at first, it is important to do so. Policies and programmes in those areas respond to people's needs and thus can have an impact on the lives of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities, for example, experience the effects of climate change differently and more severely than persons without disabilities. It is therefore important to analyse the implications of all policies and programmes for persons with disabilities, to ensure that they are inclusive.

C. Participation

63. Persons with disabilities know best which barriers they face in their own contexts and how they impact on their lives. Article 4 (3) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities requires States to closely consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, through their representative organizations in the development and implementation of legislation and policies concerning issues relating to them. That includes any policy and programme, whether disability-specific or mainstream, that might have a direct or indirect impact on their lives. It is therefore imperative to include them fully in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes. The Special Rapporteur has developed a thematic study on the

right of persons with disabilities to participate in decision-making that provides specific guidance on how to ensure that obligation is met (A/HRC/31/62).

64. States must adopt all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures to ensure the effective and active participation of persons with disabilities in all phases of policy development. That requires prior consultation and engagement with representative organizations of persons with disabilities before the adoption of all policies and programmes. Importantly, States should be aware that service providers may have a conflict of interest and should give priority to the views of representative organizations of persons with disabilities led by persons with disabilities themselves.

65. Preparatory studies and analysis for policy formulation should include consultation and engagement with representative organizations of persons with disabilities, and incorporate relevant data on persons with disabilities and on potential barriers and facilitators in the environment that might influence policy outcomes. Proposals for policy design should also clearly identify how persons with disabilities will be included. Any public forum or process for reviewing policy proposals should be fully accessible to persons with disabilities and representative organizations of persons with disabilities should be invited to participate in them.

66. Implementation and evaluation should also be conducted in a participatory manner. Efforts should be made to recruit persons with disabilities into the State apparatus and to positions with private entities contracted by Governments. States should explore partnerships with representative organizations of persons with disabilities for the provision of services in order to gain inputs from users of services themselves, without waiving their primary responsibility for service provision. All monitoring and evaluation systems should examine the level of engagement of persons with disabilities in all policies and programmes.

D. Monitoring

67. National strategies and plans for the inclusion of persons with disabilities must be cross-cutting and comprehensive, with clear lines of accountability as to which State authorities are responsible for implementing them and in what time frame. States must designate an entity with the required authority for overseeing the implementation of such strategies, including requesting and receiving reports and other internal data from other line ministries in order to effectively monitor their actions in implementing disability-inclusive policies. States must also ensure that the agencies mandated with the different aspects of implementation are provided with adequate resources for that purpose. Government focal points and coordination mechanisms to advance and facilitate the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities should be considered for that purpose, as foreseen in article 33 (1) of the Convention.

68. The effective implementation of laws, policies and regulations promoting disability inclusion also requires strong enforcement mechanisms, with meaningful penalties for non-compliance. Enforcement mechanisms should be focused at two levels. On the one hand, the State entity overseeing the national strategic plans on disability inclusion must have the authority to initiate investigations and recommend sanctions to both State and private entities who fail to implement them. Those can range from simply making the list of non-compliant entities public to the levying of

fines, or the confiscation of public funds. On the other hand, persons with disabilities should themselves be able to trigger a procedure when they feel that State or private entities have failed to comply with adopted policies and programmes.

69. At the very least, States should establish complaint mechanisms for persons with disabilities to lodge grievances against non-compliance with laws and regulations. Those grievances should be investigated and sanctioned accordingly. National human rights institutions and independent mechanisms to promote, protect and monitor implementation of the Convention can play a key role in carrying out inquiries and investigations into the implementation of policies and programmes (as required by article 33 (2)), as well as providing assistance to persons with disabilities in accessing legal remedies. Consumer protection agencies have also demonstrated that they can be an effective mechanism for challenging non-compliance with the rights of persons with disabilities.

E. Budgeting

70. States must ensure that all sectoral budgets are devised in accordance with their strategies and plans for the inclusion of persons with disabilities and that public spending is monitored. First, ministries should budget and be accountable for all spending on disability-specific expenditures. Some States have established earmarked funds for persons with disabilities in the budget of all their government entities, aimed at covering disability-specific initiatives.[29] Those schemes promote both service demand and supply, making programmes increasingly inclusive. Secondly, all sectoral budgets must include indicators to measure how much of the general mainstream budget pursues objectives that support the inclusion of persons with disabilities. To be effective, those measures must be accompanied by training and guidance for finance officers.

71. All expenditures should be monitored to ensure compliance with the human rights-based approach to disability. Public funds should not be spent to perpetuate or reinforce discrimination and the exclusion of persons with disabilities (for example, by constructing residential institutions). Consideration should be given to State budget and expenditure frameworks producing reports, in collaboration with representative organizations of persons with disabilities and national human rights institutions, to identify spending that is not consistent with the rights of persons with disabilities, in order to prevent the waste or inefficient use of public resources. Contributions received for the present report illustrate that corruption in State institutions and service providers and flawed procurement processes have an additional negative impact on the allocation of resources.

F. Data collection

72. States should have a timely system for generating appropriate indicators, including the disability indicators outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals and the disaggregation of all indicators by "disability status". In addition, States

[29] The Philippines, for example, have established an earmarked fixed percentage of their annual budget for persons with disabilities. In China and Thailand, fines resulting from non-compliance of employment quotas contribute to a funding mechanism that finances programmes and projects for persons with disabilities.

may need to develop national indicators to address specific goals and concerns tailored to their particular country context. To produce such indicators, States are required to disaggregate data by disability. Article 31 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities requires States to collect statistics and data to enable them to formulate and implement policies to give effect to the rights of persons with disabilities.

73. The short set of six questions on disability formulated by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics provides a well-tested method for identifying persons with disabilities in national surveys and censuses in an internationally comparable manner. Adding the questions to national surveys (for example, household income and expenditure surveys, labour force surveys and demographic and health surveys) will enable the disaggregation of data needed to monitor most public policies, as well as the indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals. Together with the Washington Group, the United Nations Children's Fund has developed a specific set of questions for children with disabilities and the International Labour Organization is developing a module on employment and disability for labour force surveys. Other relevant instruments available for in-depth data collection on disability include the WHO model disability survey. All those tools are important for supporting the efforts of States to collect data disaggregated by disability.

G. Embracing diversity

74. A cultural change in how disability is perceived is essential for disability-inclusive policies to be truly successful. Persons with disabilities must not be seen as objects of aversion or charity, but rather as rights holders in the same way as every member of society. An inclusive policy framework must therefore contain strong components that focus on awareness-raising and combating stereotypes and negative attitudes towards disability and persons with disabilities. Awareness-raising efforts can consist of training for State authorities, public officials, the private sector and the media, multimedia campaigns and the incorporation of disability-sensitive materials in school curricula.

75. Knowledge of the rights of persons with disabilities, including legislation, policies and regulations that govern inclusion and how to access State programmes, must be disseminated. According to article 4 (1) (i) of the Convention, States must provide training to professionals and staff working with persons with disabilities, including public officials and service providers, on how to address the rights, concerns and needs of persons with disabilities.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

76. **Persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected by inequalities, with significant consequences for individuals, families, communities and societies in general. In order to overcome those inequalities, States must ensure that their national policies and programmes address the needs of persons with disabilities and promote the active participation of their representative organizations in their design, implementation and evaluation. For that purpose, it is necessary to adopt disability-inclusive development strategies that incorporate non-discrimination, accessibility and support measures for persons**

with disabilities. The United Nations and international cooperation partners should play a crucial role in supporting national efforts for the implementation of disability-inclusive policies, including data collection and monitoring.

77. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, most States will conduct a review of their national policies against the goals and targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. That represents a unique opportunity to include persons with disabilities adequately across all policies and programmes, as well as to ensure policy coherence and intersectoral coordination. Leaving no persons with disabilities behind requires that all States and relevant stakeholders collaborate to design and implement policies and programmes that are inclusive of persons with disabilities.

78. The Special Rapporteur makes the following recommendations to States with the aim of assisting them in developing and implementing disability-inclusive policies:

(a) Mainstream the rights and needs of persons with disabilities into all policies and programmes and ensure specific programmes and services for needs that cannot be covered by mainstream programmes;

(b) Ensure a human rights-based approach to disability in the design, implementation and evaluation of all policies and programmes;

(c) Ensure the active involvement and participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the design, implementation and evaluation of all policies and programmes;

(d) Integrate a gender perspective in such policies and programmes, addressing the intersectionality of discrimination faced by women and girls with disabilities;

(e) Establish a clear policy framework that prohibits all forms of discrimination on the basis of disability and guarantees to persons with disabilities equal and effective legal protection against discrimination on all grounds;

(f) Ensure the provision of reasonable accommodation in all programmes, services and interventions, establishing a dedicated funding mechanism for government entities;

(g) Establish a comprehensive policy framework on accessibility, including national accessibility standards and enforcement mechanisms;

(h) Establish a policy framework to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to assistive technologies and support services that are available, accessible, adequate and affordable, and provided under a community-based approach;

(i) Ensure free access to assistive technologies and support services for the poor, as part of the State universal health coverage and social protection systems;

(j) Establish an intersectoral policy framework for the inclusion of persons with disabilities across all sectors and at all levels of governance and

consider implementing specific national action plans on accessibility, assistive devices and support services;

(k) Develop disability-related indicators to assess adequately the impact of all policies and programmes on persons with disabilities;

(l) Incorporate the short set of questions formulated by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics in all national surveys and censuses to collect data disaggregated on the basis of disability;

(m) Allocate funds to all public entities to make their policies, programmes and services progressively available, accessible and inclusive of persons with disabilities;

(n) Encourage international cooperation actors to support disability-inclusive policies and programmes and refrain from supporting any policy, programme or practice that is inconsistent with the rights of persons with disabilities.

79. **The Special Rapporteur also recommends that the United Nations, including all its programmes, funds and specialized agencies, adequately consider the rights of persons with disabilities in all its work, and that it increase the capacities and promotes the collaboration of United Nations country teams to strengthen internal synergies and coherence when supporting States in implementing disability-inclusive policies.**

United Nations A/71/315

General Assembly

Distr.: General
9 August 2016

Original: English

Seventy-first session
Item 50 of the provisional agenda*
Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/87, concerns the provision of the facilities and staff necessary to support the work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories.

* A/71/150.

16-13779 (E) 170816

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1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/87. In line with paragraph 8 of that resolution, the Secretariat continued to provide the facilities and staff necessary to support the work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories. In 2016, the Special Committee was represented by the following three members: the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations in New York, Amrith Rohan Perera; the Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations in New York, Ramlan Bin Ibrahim; and the Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, Mame Baba Cisse.

2. The Special Committee was directly supported in the fulfilment of its mandate by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Department of Safety and Security of the Secretariat, the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat and the office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Jordan. In addition, the Committee engaged with OHCHR in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

3. Much of the support was related to the Special Committee's annual investigative mission to the region. In the light of the continuing practice of Israel of non-cooperation with the Committee, the latter was not able to visit the occupied territories. The Committee therefore held meetings in Amman from 2 to 5 May 2016. In addition, it held consultations with several Member States on 21 and 22 March 2016 in Geneva. During its mission to Amman, the Committee collected testimony and information from victims, witnesses, officials and civil society representatives working on documenting and preventing violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the occupied territories. Those testimonies and briefings are recorded in the Committee's report to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session.

Department of Public Information

4. Pursuant to paragraph 8 (d) of resolution 70/87, the Department of Public Information continued to cover and promote the activities of the Special Committee during the reporting period, using its entire range of communications platforms in multiple languages.

5. United Nations Radio covered in the six official languages of the United Nations, in addition to Portuguese and Kiswahili, all principal activities and statements on the subject matter, including meetings of and statements by the Special Committee.

6. The Department continued to promote issues relating to the work of the Special Committee through the United Nations website in the six official languages. News stories appearing on the United Nations News Centre platforms were also distributed through social media accounts, via rich site summary feeds and by means of the portal's e-mail news service subscription.

7. The Department's webcasting services provided live and on-demand coverage to a global audience through United Nations Web TV (webtv.un.org) of all open meetings relating to the work of the Special Committee.

8. The Department's Meetings Coverage Section provided coverage of the Special Committee's reports when they were taken up by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) and by the General Assembly. In that context, the Section issued 10 press releases in English and French. The Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit, together with the associated Media Documents Centre, e-mailed the Committee's documents and related press releases to their clients and used social media to inform their followers about the Committee's activities.

9. The *Yearbook of the United Nations*, as the authoritative reference on the annual activities and concerns of the Organization, continued to regularly cover the work of the Special Committee.

10. The Department's network of 63 United Nations information centres, services and offices was also active in promoting the human rights of the Palestinian people through the commemoration of relevant international days and observances and public information activities.

11. Issues relating to Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people were also discussed in the context of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, which was observed at Headquarters on 23 November 2015 and across the globe with targeted public information activities by the United Nations information centres, services and offices. The activities included film screenings, panel discussions and forums, interviews with experts and Palestinians, exhibits and messages to raise awareness of the rights of the Palestinian people and to end discrimination faced by Palestinians and other Arabs living in the occupied territories.

12. The United Nations Information Centre in Cairo supported the annual fact-finding visit of the Special Committee to the region from 2 to 5 May 2016 through media outreach and liaison.